"...boring, meaningless, pathetic..."

- Genesis P-Orridge, London, 1982.

"Maurizio Bianchi was a one-off and one of the most enigmatic figures in all twentieth-century music. Working in isolation in Italy, he produced over ten albums and myriad cassettes of uniquely depressing power electronics between 1980 and 1984, before becoming a Jehovah's Witness.

Listening to his chilling noise and themes of genocide, one can certainly empathise with the torment he was going through at this time. In many ways the self-aware psychological depth of MB's work sets it slightly apart from the rest of the scene.

In recent years, a superb set of CD reissues has been made available, and two new albums of Jehovah New Age music have been issued under his name. There exists a magnificent internet site devoted to an extremely fetishistic survey of MB releases.

MB is someone worth fetishising."

- Excerpt from Bang Out of Order by Anonymous, 2001.

### DRUNK ON DECAY

The big wooden door swung open. I could see the silhouette of the man. An open hand greeting me. "Finally..." he said "I've been waiting for you..." We had been corresponding for a few years.

He was soft spoken; very polite. He sat me down. We started talking. About rot. About decay. About pollution as an acceleration of evolution. I told him about my idea for releasing a silent record. One packed with instructions which informed the holder that he must first complete the recording. By scratching it; before he could listen to it on his stereo. My host laughed.

He talked about the idea of negative denotations with positive connotations. Of positive denotations with negative connotations. We agreed that in fact, this was what we were both doing in our noise. Destroying the ugly by making it beautiful; as well as destroying the beautiful by making it ugly. A personal realignment of aesthetics. We both laughed. We continued talking all afternoon. In the evening we went out to count garbage-cans. A private performance.

He had always had a fetish for the ugly. In the months to come, when he sent me mail, his letters would always end with "...hope this gets to you before the world ends..." He was being serious.

If he had a philosophy it could have been summed up with his famous quote: "Only he, who everyday must reconquer it for himself, deserves the freedom and with it the life." But his ugliness fetish had become an obsession. He would soon stop altogether with making noise. Just sit in his room. Waiting for biology to stop. Waiting for atoms to die.

He hasn't written me in years; but I still think of him as one of my dearest friends. I still find myself listening to his records and tapes a lot. I too have always had a fetish for the ugly. An obsession really.

His predominance with many noisicians can still be heard. Not in the sounds composers pick, nor in their purpose for doing such recordings, but in their attitude towards the issue of composition. An unrelenting focus which is found in so much of the work being done as of late was clearly foretold in his early recordings.

After our meeting I started travelling even more. Travelling everywhere I could get to. Visiting garbage dumps everywhere I went. Garbage dumps are beauty.

G. X. Jupitter-Larsen, 1997

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### **FLOWMOTION** #4, 1982

"I started everything ten years ago when I listened to Zeit by Tangerine Dream – I was very impressed by those physiological sounds, they've the quality to bring up human neurosis."

So a starting point is made, music to be felt rather than listened to:

"My other early influences were Conrad Schnitzler and then... TG."

After a number of musique concrète cassettes, Maurizio obtains a simple Korg synth and a Roland rhythm box to add to his base of radio waves and 'electromechanical impulses.' This creates a new musical sound, with none of the qualities of conventional music, but of great interest. MB remains largely unknown within his own country:

"The Italians are good listeners, but with a bad appreciation, that's why Italian experimental artists are always subject to anonymity in their own country although they find a prolific field abroad where experiments in music are estimated really highly."

His first vinyl release was part of an international compilation release on Bain Total Records of France, but eventually he paves a link with Come Organisation:

"About twelve months ago I came in touch with Come Organisation and wrote an article on Whitehouse and Come that was published in Rockerilla magazine – A Fetish! William Bennett seemed very interested in my writings and cassette tapes so he proposed that I do some records for Come Organisation. This all happened very quickly and without profit."

Under the name of Leibstandarte SS MB two albums were released, *Triumph Of The Will* and *Weltanschauung*, the first having two eighteen minute tracks of German war propaganda broadcasts, below which extreme electronic noises reverberated. A detestable sort of sound that can prove difficult to listen to.

"I'm not involved in Nazi credo, but I use that device to shock people (and he adds sadistically) as I'm a mass murderer..."

The second album has only one German propaganda track, "Under The Victory Banner", with the remainder being three tracks of his extreme electronics.

"I can define my sound as 'psychological disinfection' – you can't use my music/noise as a background only as a foreground. In my more radical works I try to electrocute the listener, to gurgle his blood and to violate his nervous system. This is sadistic you may think, but it's resolute, determined and without compromise. I'm living in a decrepit society and the superstructures everywhere try to bend my creativity. I come out with violence as the listener unconsciously needs this harsh raw treatment to dispel his doubts about life and death."

MB also contributes a track to the new Come Org. sampler album *Fur Ilse Koch* along with other mass media murderers, though he says there are no plans for a new Leibstandarte SS MB album.

In between the releases of these two albums there comes *Symphony For A Genocide* an album on the Nocturnal Emissions' Sterile Records. Seven tracks of electronic distortion and rhythmic distortions, slightly more accessible perhaps

but more 'industrial' than TG ever were. Another compilation track on *Fix Planet!* for Germanys Ata Tak label brings him finally to release an album, *Menses*, as a limited edition Italian release.

"I can't call my sounds 'music' but only 'feelings in a wall of sound' – they're progressing only in the measure that the listener remains tormented by their power, and he feels he wants to change his life in a less blind manner."

*Menses* again more accessible with, on one side, discernable rhythmic features underneath his electronic textures.

"I'm working totally with the synthetic instruments, but I don't exclude in the future a return to the musique concrète, using the progress I'm getting now with my latest release Morder Unter Uns, a movie soundtrack, directed by Paul Hurst of Come Org., in which I explore the human tragedy."

"I think my work expresses the fear of the forthcoming totalitarianism in life, in the death, in the mind, in the art. I want to stay in my corner without compromise and to continue my daily struggle against super structures and social lobotomy. I claim my individuality and like Whitehouse, Nurse With Wound etc. I find myself fully achieved in the human sacrifice."

## G.X. JUPITTER-LARSEN (THE HATERS) As told to Don Campau, 2011

"Back in 1980 I just gave my records away at punk shows or sent them off as mail art. I was completely out of the loop when it came to what the kids in the industrial scene were up to. It wasn't till 1982 when a mail artist in Texas passed one of my records along to Maurizio Bianchi in Italy. MB then contacted me directly. It was soon after that when MB told Merzbow about me and the three of us started trading like crazy. This was all done via the post office. It took weeks to complete a trade."

"Anyhow, it was because of my correspondence with MB and Merzbow that I finally got plugged into a scene that was slowing becoming what we now know as Cassette Culture. Must have sent stuff in for a couple hundred cassette comps. Some got released, some didn't. Even if the thing did get released, a lot of the time there were only enough copies made so each of the artists who took part could get one single copy. Still, at the time, it was the best way to get your stuff out there. And it was a great way to get to know what like-minded people were up to."

### INDUSTRIAL REPORT #2, 1992

I tried to ascertain whether Maurizio Bianchi is still living at an old address, or not. I mailed a registered letter to his old address (written in English). The result: here is the receipt. Who is the receiver? I don't know.



As a preview for a detailed special article about MB in a future issue, here I quote some letters and infos from the kind helpers who had ever contacted MB many times – Vittore Baroni & Giancarlo Toniutti (both from Italy), Alain Neffe (Belgium), and William Bennett (UK)

#### Vittore Baroni

"As a journalist MB wrote for several small punk fanzines, then for 2-3 years for Rockerilla magazine... in '81 MB just stopped writing completely (he was mainly reviewing bands he liked at the time like Come Org bands, TG, Residents etc...)

"There had been 2 collaboration K7s of MB and Lt. Murnau (Baroni solo project):

It Should Be Used Only Once (Litanic / Germany) '82

TECHNO-LOGY (Flowmotion / England) '83 – Maybe you already supposed, it was taken from his self-produced K7 Technology 2 (which you can listen to as a back track of Leibstandarte SS MB Triumph Of The Will LP)."

"My collaboration with MB and Lt. Murnau was very simple, in both K7s did together I added one track of my own material (collages, sounds from movies by F.W. Murnau,

etc) to one track of electronics received on K7 by MB. I suspect MB at the time was sending out on K7 various proofs for his LPs, rehearsals and even same material that appears on his self-produced albums... I do not plan to re-release, anyway I believe they were just small games, not very important musically. I did the final mix on a toymixer!"

### **Alain Neffe**

"He sent me several tapes and one LP... I gave the LP to a friend and I erased the tapes. I must admit that I didn't like his music at all... a lot of noise, really very boring. He used to write to me on dirty paper, sometimes reused ones, torn apart. We got into an argument because some of the titles were connected to Nazi or racist stuff, but I think he was only trying to shock people. I heard a rumour saying he was handicapped and hid from the outside world. About his stopping, well it was not predictable, he used to release a lot of materials and write a lot. Suddenly, he totally stopped."

#### **William Bennett**

### When did you come across Maurizio Bianchi?

Maurizio was a big Whitehouse fan from the beginning and corresponded regularly and latterly sending tapes of his excellent music.

What was your favourite record of Maurizio? Masami Akita (Merzbow) said his style was changed since *Mectpyo Bakterium* LP (unfortunately I never had a chance to hear it, I can't say anything based on my own ears). For your ears, his change was recognised?

I liked most of his early stuff especially *Symphony For A Genocide* and *Technology 1 & 2.* His style, certainly after a couple of years, was sounding much more mellow.

Did Maurizio Bianchi collect/record alone all materials of Leibstandarte SS MB? I found that *Triumph Of The Will* was overdubbing of Hitler speeches on his previously released materials (*Technology 1 & 2*). There's no material under the name Leibstandarte SS MB, except from Come Org. Were you director or producer for this "project"?

Maurizio's contract with Come Org allowed extra production and addition to be made at IPS.

In your record/K& review of in Kata 13 you referred to "NH" as his power style. I know two cassettes you might call NH... NH HN released in Belgium '81 and NH (Nevro Hydra) his homemade release in '81. Which K7 did you refer to?

Nevro Hydra was being referred to. I still think this was a classic MB recording but not the other one.

\*In a review of the Symphony For A Genocide LP, Bennett said "There are two different MB styles – the technological power works (X, NH, Triumph) and secondly the low key depression pieces which this record belongs to."

### Giancarlo Toniutti

"I think his words were often spoiled. I will translate for you a couple of the words appearing on his double LP Endometrio/Carcinosi which I think explain well his attitude:

- a) 'The Bionic Music (as he called his music sometimes) rejects intransigently any sort of neo-avantgardism or neo-poetics of the object, to affirm the reasons of a deep bionic/human and physiologic/evolutive engagement.'
- b) 'Today everyone imagines Oswiencim-Brezezinka knowing that it is part of the bad conscience of man, because this tremendous crime had been done by man. And man knows that he, under certain circumstances, is able to invent more Oswiencim-Brezezinka.'

I think the above statements can clarify exactly MB's view, also concerning his large use of Nazi imagery."

## A NEUROTRONIC ABYSS OF SOUND WITHIN MENINGITIC TWILIGHTS

### Stephan Kraus, 1997

MB is the mysterious-autistic abbreviation of the name of an Italian "TONE CREATOR" from Milan, who – between 1979 and 1984 – recorded and released some highly *obscure* "music" that had actually gone *far beyond* that narrow term.

As initial influences upon his sound works MB quoted – amongst others – such teutonic-krautrockic "*Elekktro-Akkustik-Okkultists*" like Kluster, Organisation and very early Tangerine Dream...

Apart from these "initial influences" the NOISE COSMOS of MB became a totally unique, basically unmistakable (but often hard to swallow) "brand of sonic austerity" that is simultaneously able to activate and atomise all kinds of neurosis, disgruntlement and depression within the mind of the listener of MB's records. This effect is always achieved by an aural CUT in unfathomable chasms of psychoneural privacy!

The "MUSIC" of MB (- going more and more astray from "musical definitions" the longer one is exposed to it -) is presenting itself without any (official) task to entertain... – but that goes not for those listeners who feel highly amused by the repetitive exorcism of monotony, dullness and boredom. As a matter of fact the soundscapes of Maurizio Bianchi are full of monotony, dullness and boredom, but without creating a boring, dulling or monotonous effect upon the listener. MB's pieces – often lasting twenty to thirty minutes in one go – are creeping into the ears and minds like a stream of lava slowly becoming cold. The recordings of MB might be loosely and historically associated with the field of "Industrial Music" – though you would neither do the MB-noises nor the term "Industrial Music" a big favour in assuming so.

By the means of his uncouth and over-casted "Tonkunst", MB is performing an exorcism on daily frustrations – ejecting it out of his soul and also out of the souls of the listener by adopting and incorporating a touch of the MACHINE-LIKE that is always to be found in his streaky, surging and meandering compositions within a darkened, evaporating form. Therefore a certain AURAL AURA is created that hardly reaches the body by the hearing apparatus but is directly perceived as a physical signal: "A MUSIC THAT IS RATHER FELT THAN TO BE HEARD".

From the liner notes to a re-issue of an early audio tape by MB (USA, 1992)<sup>1</sup>

"The emergence of MB, from Milano, heralds in a new era of experimental electronics emerging from Italy. MB's compositions are influenced by the power of industrial technology and its dehumanising effect on society and the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> This re-issue was published as a part of the so called *MB Archival Series* of the US-label Banned Production in Fremont, California: The "Archival Series" (including small booklets) consisted of tapes that had been originally issued in the early 80s by MB himself in a very small quantity – public resonance was nearly nil. Since 1992 the people at Banned Production have tried to bring these recordings to a wider audience – but even this *second* edition of the cassettes (to be recognised by a 1945 photo of the dead Mussolini hanging from the roof of a gas station in Milan) was only produced in a tiny circulation. By now (nearly) *all* MB tapes should be deleted...

individual. MB's electronic storms create images ranging from industrial power to chaos, confusion and violence." (Kent of Aeon)

### MB in an interview (1982):

"I can define my sound as physiological disinfestation. You can't use my noise as background, only as foreground. In my radical works I try to electrocute the listener, to gurgle his blood and to violate his nervous system. This is sadistic you may think; but it's resolute, determined and without compromise.

I'm living in a decrepit society and the superstructures everywhere try to bend my creativity. I come out with violence as the listener unconsciously needs this harsh raw treatment to dispel his doubts about life and death. (...)

I can't call my sounds music, but only feelings in a wall of sound. They're progressing only in the measure that the listener remains tormented by their power and feels the need to change his life in a less blind manner. (...)

I think my work expresses the fear of the forthcoming totalitarianism in life, in death, in the mind, and in art. I want to stay in my corner without compromise and to continue my daily struggle against superstructures and social lobotomy."

Maurizio Bianchi started his sonic "anti-art" in August 1979 under the pseudonym "Sacher-Pelz" by recording early sound experiments. His self-produced audio tapes were then distributed by MB himself on his own label "Marquis-Tape" which only existed a few years. I have at hand the C60-tapes Cainus, Venus, Cease To Exist and Velours; the entire output as Sacher-Pelz comprised – according to MB – six hours of recordings; they were situated at the very brink of aural doom!

These four tapes (with tiny dedications to such notorious people like Throbbing Gristle, Monte Cazazza, Marquis de Sade, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, Charlie M. and his Family and Metabolist Device) impress the listener – despite of a clear separation of titled pieces – by emitting an indiscriminate surge of dense and primitive musique concrète; this goes without any academic pretentiousness in the fashion of Pierre Henry or Pierre Schaeffer.

On these early tapes MB had already exercised his first etudes in grim inaccessibility: By using monotony and dullness in a retrograde fashion to shape his sounds, an effect of negative hypnotism was achieved. This effect, however, was not at all suitable for entering a trance-like condition – it rather served as a means to expose and attack neurotic structures in the relentlessly bombarded mind of the listener – structures which were well known to MB as they seemed to be part of his psyche and should also be regarded as an important breeding ground for his creativity.

On the *Venus* tape (1979) MB is offering a very successful example of a *détournant*-like abuse of original sound material not recorded by his own – transforming it into a piece of atavistic *concrete music*: In this very case MB had taken a track from Kraftwerk's *Autobahn* LP (1974) and stripped it bare of all its original meaning by the use of tape manipulation, slow recording and endless reiteration of single fragments. The final product of this "reworking" leaves the original piece in a state of destruction – being smashed beyond recognition! The

adopted piece – called "Mitternacht" (midnight) – originally lasts four minutes only and appears to be a tiny, somehow spooky composition on the Kraftwerk LP... By electronic sound dots and distorted violin screeches it is setting to music the morbid charm of an impending "ghost hour". Well... after the *treatment* by Maurizio Bianchi that peculiar atmosphere has totally *vanished* from the piece! Instead of that MB fragmentarily *mutilated* this sound model into a subdued roaring context of "INDUSTRY" – here the stream of noise is dragging itself along in a relentlessly throbbing manner, lasting circa twenty minutes, and therefore rendering the tiny spooky "Mitternacht" much more technocratic (hence more "*kraftwerkic*") than even Ralf Hütter and Florian Schneider themselves were able to achieve in their rather *elegiac* original version!<sup>2</sup>

The last minutes of the A-Side on the *Venus* tape are devoted to a second adaptation of Kraftwerk-material: This time MB chose the track "*Radiosterne*" (radio stars) from the *Radio-Activity* LP (1975). He exposed it to a similar rough montage, using primitive *loops* of recurring seconds and *stop-and-go-treatments* at the tape machine, unless the piece seems to constantly *start and collapse* at the very same time. The final result of this "operation" causes the cold cosmic remoteness of the original "Radiosterne" to drown into a *staccato of mechanistic stuttering*!

The B-Side of *Venus*, however, is presenting no more reworking of "foreign" material, but some dim anti-noises of a repetitive nature that seemed to have been created and recorded by MB himself – these peculiar sounds already showed some obvious hints into the direction of a VORTEX-LIKE *SOUND SMELTING* that was to become the characteristic "trademark" of the later vinyl products by Maurizio Bianchi.

In contrast to that, the *Cease To Exist* cassette (1979/80) featured subdued but nevertheless forceful *tape loops* consisting of concrete, mostly distorted voice-and sound-material – a concept that, by the very first listen, reminds one of the unapproachable, enigmatic-complicated harmonies and dissonances on the first long player of Boyd Rice<sup>3</sup>. Here again MB stepped into a psychic nightfall – something that cannot be considered "sane" on a long-term basis but rather leads to the effect of "steeling yourself" within sickness!

The fourth tape – *Velours* (1980) – continued the experiments of *Cease To Exist* by directing them into the realms of an again stringent musique concrete. This was achieved by the use of sound loops of simple piano-accords, percussion-sequences or the throbbing of a rhythm machine garnished with an overlay of noise-streaks – Altogether this tape is no exception in the sequels of "derangements" that were always present in MB's output as Sacher-Pelz – obviously these early "sound carvings" were nothing else but a successful *blueprint* of the forthcoming "*NOISE EMISSIONS*" that Maurizio Bianchi produced and released between 1981 and 1984 using just his own name (or his initials *MB*).

<sup>3</sup> Boyd Rice – *Boyd Rice / Black Album*; LP; Mute Records, STUMM 4; England; 1980 (Re-Issue). Recorded 1975 / 76 in the USA; there the album was firstly issued in a very small circulation.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> By the way... Few years later MB repeated the "SACHER-PELZ"-version of "Mitternacht" on his *Industrial Tape* (ca. 1981) by adding some minor variations to it. Finally some highly distorted / reduced samples of "Mitternacht" are also to be found on MB's *Mectpyo Blut* tape.

In this he set no compromises – MB mostly achieved the *most gut-wrenching effects* on his highly obscure records.

In the year 1980 a drastic *change* appeared in the formerly "recluse" concept of Maurizio Bianchi. Now he started to get in contact with several independent record labels in Western Europe...: So he contributed his own tracks to the tape-/vinyl-samplers *International Compilation 2* issued on Bain Total in France (then the home of Die Form) and *Fix Planet!* issued on Ata Tak in Germany (then the home of Der Plan). Although MB's presence on various samplers never was that ubiquitous than the variety of his "isolated" solo productions, Maurizio used to donate some *further* strange noise materials to several other vinyl- and tape-compilations in England, Italy, USA and Germany – this lasted until the sudden *end* of his abstruse "TONKUNST" in 1984...4

Also in 1980 Maurizio Bianchi's first official tape under the "MB"-banner was issued: It was entitled *Mectpyo Blut*, lasted ninety minutes, featured two different concepts on the A- and B-side and in its whole temperament appeared to be an aggravated and aggressive reprise of the quintessence of all his former Sacher-Pelz-cassettes. Here is a short review of this tape – taken from the accompanying booklet of the *MB ARCHIVAL SERIES* on Banned Production:

"Mectpyo Blut, his first cassette, consists of two tragic sections imbued with synthetic chloroform: the 1st, 'Maidanek Bakterium / Musique Belzec', exhales an icy atmosphere conveying a sense of mystery and annihilation. The 2nd, 'Mutant Brain / Mord Bahnhof' assembled the most disparate electro-hypnotic levitations into a vertical rationality, bold, morbid and haunting. Psychic-cerebral works, they seem to spring from a neuro-atomic continent, with unreal outlines, where its influence artificially expands the ankylotic tissues by environmental arthrosis."

After this nothing remains to be said... The painful "otherworldliness" of the MB-attitude concerning the MUTILATION OF SOUND is clearly expressed in the above statement.

At the very first listen MB's next audio cassette – *Com.SA* (1980) – just seems to be a randomly constructed succession of overlapping synthetic cheeps and bleeps

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Here's a short list of MB's "official" contributions to several compilations: "Accop (6) Ehte"; "Sordide Sentimental"; "Anesthésie Totale" (on International Compilation 2, 1980) – "Milan Bruits" (on Fix Planet!, 1980) – "Plutoniumetrio" (on Für Ilse Koch, 1982) – "Industrial Murder / Menstrual Bleeding" (on Nowhere To Play, 1982) – "Acido Prussico" (on Neuengamme, 1982) – "Extract from Muuhn" (on Sinn und Form, 1982) – "untitled" (on Mail Music, 1983) – "untitled" (on International Friendship, 1983) - "Placenta" (on 40 Days / 40 Nights, 1983). Beyond that some "unofficial" contributions by MB existed on highly dubious samplers - these tracks were mostly ripped-off parts from MB's own records used without permission or payment (most notorious in that respect is the Anthology 2-LP-bootleg that was released in 1991 or 92 in Japan and sold for an extortionate price). There were several other (probably also "unofficial"?) MB-tapes not issued by "Banned" but by Murder Release in Italy: DIC 1980 (with early cheap synth experiments lacking any profound effect), Voyeur Tape and Cold Tape (with a minimal, partly tragic partly amusing musique concrète approach), Mectpyo Compresa (a reprise of the Mectpyo Blut tape), I.B.M" (with a first exercise in the grinding-shuffling neurotronic "Technoise Sound" which MB put into perfection on his later Mörder Unter Uns / Neuro Habitat LP), Computers S.p.A. (a tape that is verging towards the chirping bleeps of Com. SA) and Industrial Tape (with another indecent adaptation of Kraftwerk's "Mitternacht" and – on the other side – harsh loops of "Technoise Sound" deploying an overwhelming apocalyptic urgency).

as they are emitted from electronic plastic toy guns or cheap video/computer games. It takes a while for the tape to change your mind – suddenly the noise impact becomes different: A cacophonic effect is occurring out of the repetitive bleeping patterns, somehow creating a sonic scenario of decaying mindscapes within feverish brains.

#### Banned Production describe it thus:

"Com. SA inaugurates, just using synths, the pale cruelty of existential intermediary: this corrosive exhumation of embalmed and livid accessories is related to early Teutonic acoustic-occultism (Conrad Schnitzler, Kluster, Organisation, early Tangerine Dream, etc.). It's an essential condition for every technologic procreation. Com. SA is impregnated by radiological vibrations and goes beyond the fixed limits of synthetic instruments... like cold osmosis in an obscure room..."

Another important tape from the early and formative years of MB is Technology (1981) – a sonic work that was firstly released as a single cassette, later also as a double tape ( $Technology\ I + II^5$ )... Icy layers of noise are meandering in the aural background, sometimes becoming more obvious, than falling back again, whereas occasional drones of  $synth\ solos$  are keeping the whole melange together like a corset, therefore preventing it from drifting away into nothingness! The Technology tape is a remarkable  $psycho\ aural\ composition$  that – after repeated plays – reaches and affects the SOUL of the listener much  $more\ directly\ and\ irritates\ it\ more\ profoundly\ that\ any\ other "conventional" music can do. This double cassette is a highly ambivalent neurotic-neurotronic DEPRESSIVA / ANTI-DEPRESSIVA – on one hand it eradicates bad moods... but on the other hand it also annihilates all happiness! – This is a wickedly <math>balanced\ piece\ of\ pure\ "gutter\ genius"!$ 

### Here are Banned Production again:

"Technology, a strong mixture of the earlier works with added sounds of industrial pollution; a fermentation of apathetic and bankrupt note clusters. It's an attempt that seeks psycho-analytic penetration of an illegitimate metabolism, lost between a distressed dimension and lost personality. The health of this work is weak and exhibits the hallucinatory shades of an inhospitable factory covered with grey metal... Technology loads with frost the bleached bones of this terrestrial wasteland, balanced among alchemical experimentation and monastic electronics. MB is on the point to confess his worried secret: 'Concrete sounds on present grounds.'."

Maurizio Bianchi's first (and somehow *reluctant*) "escape" from his rather autistic self-isolation started in 1981 with the release of his fist vinyl long player in England on the label Come Organisation – then the home of William Bennett's Whitehouse<sup>6</sup>. The LP was called *Triumph Of The Will* and was issued under the name Leibstandarte SS MB. The record consisted of basic tracks taken from the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Technology II adds some "dirty" rhythm machines and backwards running sound loops to the basic score of the first Technology tape.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> In 1981 Maurizio was reputed to be a great admirer of the Whitehouse-style power electronics – he also wrote some reviews in Italian music magazines featuring vinyl products of such industrial "noise makers" like S.P.K. or several groups on the Come Org label...

two *Technology* tapes – in the LP-version the tracks had been treated by an additional overlay of original *propaganda speeches* by Top-Nazis from the Third Reich (for instance Hitler's "*unofficial*" and somehow *belated* "declaration of war" against Poland [September 1st, 1939] – pronounced in the German Reichstag in Berlin when the invasion of the Wehrmacht on this country was already happening since hours!). However, this supplementary "gimmick" was *not* instigated by MB – it was just a dubious idea of the Come Organisation... This and the naming Leibstandarte SS happened after the tapes had been delivered by Maurizio – he did not give the Come Organisation permission to use Nazi-speeches and he also was unhappy with the fascist "*Schutzstaffel*"-name for his record!

Well – MB thought the Come Org. label would be engaged here in a silly, somehow pubertarian "Nazi-Flirt" and therefore saw his reputation being endangered. As a consequence Maurizio disowned Triumph Of The Will as his first LP and honoured his second long-player to actually start his official vinyl discography!

MB's second vinyl production bears the name *Symphony For A Genocide*; it was released in 1981 on the British Sterile Records label of the group Nocturnal Emissions in a tiny circulation of 250 copies<sup>7</sup>. I have at hand the (slightly different) CD re-issue of *Symphony For A Genocide* that was produced in 1994 by Tegal Records in the USA...

On SFAG a lava-like WALL OF SOUND is applied with vortex-like intensity – the record is emitting a harsh ALLUREMENT – it is negatively affecting the listener, devouring his willpower and probably causing his "mental toppling". I tell you: This record is dangerous! The grievous topic of Symphony For A Genocide<sup>8</sup> is illustrated in the track titles as they are included in the original vinyl LP: Treblinka, Auschwitz, Maidanek, Auschwitz reprise, Belzec, Chelmno, Sobibor. What at first sight could be dismissed as a cheap listing of death camps in the fashion of pure "Nazi-Lager-Kitsch" is manifesting itself during the perception of this dark and overwhelming record as an adequate and profane definition of all those densely layered sounds you are confronted with when listening to SFAG!9 This is the musical setting of the inworld of a genocide; it's the psycho-aural equivalent of the awareness of a GENOME when facing its total eradication!

Without any declaiming or accusing attitude the sheer horror of a perfect Völkermord is described here *from the inside* of the events, *from the inside* of the collective pain of a faceless mass killing. This is an *Anti-Music* for *vanishing human* 

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> It is said that Maurizio even sent the money for the production to Sterile Records – therefore enabling the label to issue the record without any financial risk.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> MB's motto for this LP: "The moral of this work is: The past punishment is the inevitable blindness of the present".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> A reprise of the genocide-theme can be found on the ultra-rare 7-inch-single by MB entitled Genocide Of The Menses. The single was issued around 1990 by the Japanese TwoThousandManiacs! label as an icy cold acetate-pressing: The tracks (probably recorded between 1982 and '84) impress by a thunderstorm of synthetically bright "sound lightnings" that are sometimes flashing across the densely seething layers of noise. In the cover of the single a bluish Polaroid photo was enclosed – it depicted the blurred shapes of a mysterious cavity that might be of organic nature.

shapes – leading to a realm of evaporating nothingness! In an interview 10 MB put it this way:

"My music is defined 'FINAL' (INDUSTRIAL MUSIC), because it represents the last sensation / feeling before the end / apocalypse – it's something like the definite breath, conscious to be the last possibility of escape, but also the conscientiousness to be at the end, at one step from the abyss."

By such a radical approach MB thoroughly rose above the worn out clichés of "Industrial Music". Therefore it is not surprising that *two things are missing* in the history of MB-music – that is LIVE GIGS and IMITATORS...

Maurizio Bianchi's dedication for a completely solitary working method did not only reduce or even avoid his *direct, physical* collaboration with other artists (to quote MB: "I don't feel any need to work in a band. My sounds are strictly personal. My work, together with others, would suffer alterations and lose its power and its efficacy."), it also excluded by definition the idea of performing on stage in front of an audience. To my knowledge no "concert recordings" by MB exist... and I don't think he ever played live. As a matter of fact the whole concept of MB – which was based on the idea of total ISOLATION<sup>11</sup> of both composer and listener – would have been utterly destroyed by performing on stage, just for the sake of delivering some positive or negative "vibrations" to an expecting audience (who surely would have tried to audio- or video-tape the whole "spectacle"!) – The NOISE COSMOS of MB extricates itself from any functional duty – getting away from the booby traps of superficial communication and consumption!

Well – if any curious neophyte wants to try it nevertheless – hoping to get involved in a nice and dulling "entertainment" of a smoothly fashion – than he will be in for a bad surprise... In the case of MB he will surely bite on granite and jump back from the dizzy steeps of a rotating SOUND CHASM that is promising nothing well at all... I tell you... Maurizio Bianchi it no "easy background ambient listening" or something. Neither is he, was he – nor will he ever be.

Considering this it just seems *logical* that the sonic "bulkiness" of the TONE EMISSIONS by MB has created a wall of impenetrability in the aura of Maurizio Bianchi... In comparison to MB's perfect obscurity nearly all main lines and subsidiaries of "Industrial Music" have been picked up, plagiarised and diluted by countless copycats over the last two decades. This "sonic plundering" resulted in the deafening and deadening of the original NOISE IMPETUS... in the very end all that remained was a sheer *inflation* of noise, exposing the boring *remains* of some formerly *inducing* ideas.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Printed in the magazine *Datenverarbeitung* – issued by the tape label of the same name that was managed by Andreas Müller in Remagen-Oberwinter, Germany, 1981-82. A reprint of the interview appeared in the booklet accompanying the *Industrial Murder / Menstrual Bleeding* LP by Maurizio Bianchi (released on Banned Production, USA, 1992).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> "The task of the lonely one is to become even more lonely". (E. M. Cioran, 1937.) So not only in the case of MB the climate of social isolation seems to be the ultimate bedrock for any independent creativity – that goes as well for many other artists and art forms. Having no personal relation to other people means not bearing any mental junk (like "love", "hate", "jealousy") in your mind that sooner or later narrows your stream of thoughts and becomes the stale equivalent to a private "soap opera".

Even Whitehouse in England and Merzbow in Japan have unwillingly created a herd of imitators over the years who are now *competing* with their mentors both on the RECORD SELLING MARKET and in the "LIVE-ON-STAGE"-INDUSTRY... alone the *sonic authenticity* of MAURIZIO BIANCHI has *avoided* any plethora of plagiarists and devoted epigones... Today there is *no precedence* of an "Industrial Music School of the MB-Sound"... though Maurizio Bianchi has *much more* profoundly plumbed the both tacit *and* horrifying depths of "Industrial Music" than any other artist in this genre... MB's dark, unnerving minimalism is simply unmatched! – Or let's just put it that way: *The Copycats are writhing on the ground, their paws are helplessly lashing out in all directions – finally they lose control of their bladders and run away pissing themselves.* – So the *final answer* is...

'MB remains *unique* – for he resides *beyond* any sonic digestion. <sup>12</sup>'

That's it. Period.

In 1982 another LP by Maurizio Bianchi appeared on the Come Organisation label in England. MB again traded under the name of "Leibstandarte SS MB" – the record was called *Weltanschauung*; it contained such tracks as "Weltanschauung", "Under The Victory Banner", "Zyklombie", "Endoradiation" and "SS 20 attack". According to the policy of Come Org this piece of vinyl was meant to be an apology – ranging as a *compensation* to MB for the spoiled *Triumph Of The Will* LP. This time Maurizio was given a free hand – therefore the additional embedding of pseudo-provocative Nazi-gimmicks in the recordings was reduced to a minimum (just *one* sycophantic speech of Herman Göring praising Adolf Hitler in "Under The Victory Banner"). The music on *Weltanschauung* is emitting some murky *synthi-treatments* and *noise-clusters* that are partly oscillating, partly framed by a cheap rhythm machine and do create effects of various intensities... The front cover of the record depicts a rough draft of the death camp Auschwitz-Birkenau...

Also in 1982 MB released his first self-produced vinyl album in a circulation of just 300 copies – he was obviously fed up with the danger of losing his full autonomy over his creative output when handing over the production of his records to another label – i.e. Come Organisation. The LP is entitled Menses and presents just two long and very different tracks – one per side: First comes "YRA" – a piece full of roaring, pumping and pushing PULSE NOISE accompanied by a dynamically throbbing beatbox. The second piece – "Scent" – is mainly based on an abstruse, sometimes siren-like swelling melange of cheaply sounding electronic chirps and squeaks...

Then out of nothing came the Mectpyo Sounds label in Italy with the release of MB's masterpiece *Mörder Unter Uns / Neuro Habitat*. The LP (1982) was packaged within a really gruesome cover: On one side there is a photography showing the disposal of a corpse in a concentration camp; on the other side there is a picture of an exposed human brain during an autopsy!

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> There is another aspect to prove the sheer inaccessibility of the MB NOISE HERITAGE... Records and tapes of MB were and still are *very hard to obtain...!!!* His original tapes and vinyl always had a minimal circulation of just 30 to 800 copies – they are all practically deleted. Until now only two ("posthumous"?) CDs featuring the re-issue of older material have been released (without MB's consent!). Well – if you make yourself scarce to such an extreme extent, you mustn't be surprised to be spared by the obtrusive spotlight of the mass music industry...!!!

Again – like on most MB-LPs – only two compositions are featured on *Mörder Unter Uns / Neuro Habitat* – each filling one side of the record. *Shall I start the praise now...?* Well: This gigantic opus by MB is and remains to be my definite *favourite* amongst all those sonic monstrosities Maurizio Bianchi has created to this very day<sup>13</sup>! The first track – "Mörder Unter Uns" – turned out to be a highly elaborated concoction of several sonic "ingredients" – they were perfectly *co-ordinated* and therefore resulted in a maximised psycho-aural efficacy: First of all there is a thick layer of dotted, subtle, sometimes *echo-like* resounding drones (reminding me of a slowed-down recording of bees buzzing!); on the other hand permanently repeated loops of treated noise-fragments are to be heard wavering in the background – they sound like processed *crackles* emerging from the "music-less" first or final grooves of vinyl records! This harsh STORM OF SOUND is somehow "heterodyned" by split-seconds of groans and moans as they are emitted by the shy, low and distantly blurred voices of faceless / speechless humans! – The "Mörder Unter Uns"-side is having a short text on the centre label – it says:

"The murder rises in the dark zones of human heart; it springs from impulses and desires which achievement only leads to the unhappiness and to further frustrations. This is the murderer tragedy".

In an interview (1982) MB illuminated this very stage of his creative evolution:

"I'm working totally with the synthetic instruments, but I don't exclude in the future a return to the musique concrète, using the progress I'm getting on with my latest release Mörder Unter Uns. This is a movie soundtrack, for a film by Paul Hurst, in which I explore the human tragedy."

The second piece on the LP – "Neuro Habitat" – is omitting any processed and looped "vinyl crackles" as they are manifested on "Mörder Unter Uns" – therefore the track is embarking on a relatively free and floating form. Nevertheless "Neuro Habitat" is *not* offering a cosmically gliding journey into an outer space full of harmony – it rather *bombards* the listener with a dire pulsating amongst a boiling hot steam of sonic sulphur: Strong echo effects are endlessly stretching and expanding single CRUMBS OF SOUND, whereas electronic *squeaks*, *hums and murmurs* are creating an otherworldly zoo full of metal creatures! Also in this composition human voices occur – this time *less* blurred. They are used – and *misused* – again as disjointed raw materials for an incomprehensible turmoil of noise...

Still in 1982 Maurizio Bianchi published his second self-produced album that continued with the astounding quality of *Mörder Unter Uns / Neuro Habitat*. It was a long-player bearing the simple (and "women-bloodily"?) title *Regel*<sup>14</sup>. The record is divided into two very different, highly impressing concept-pieces – each of them lasts more than twenty minutes: The A-Side is dominated by the appearance of tone clusters and sound cascades that are put together in an appropriate musique concrète -fashion – beyond that, these sonic elements have been *treated* 

<sup>14</sup> The former MB-LP *Menses* is already alluding to menstruation; however this very topic is never set forth unmistakably in the works of Maurizio Bianchi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Of course I am a little bit biased here – for in 1983 Mörder Unter Uns / Neuro Habiat was the first long-playing record of MB that "came to my ears" – so to say. I got it from Uli Rehberg (Walter Ulbricht label, Hamburg) as a swapping item for some copies of an essay called "Instructions For Decontamination" which was an early documentation of mine about the Australian group S.P.K.

<sup>14</sup> The former MB LP Morgos is already alluding to monstruction; however this years topic is never

by simply chasing them through an echo box which resulted in a lifeless drifting of abused noise fragments. This reminds me of a permanent landslide of moistened reverberations...

On the B-side however there is just a dirty, streaky arrangement of intertwined noise loops that are framed by the hasty throbbing of a beatbox... These two tracks of *Regel* are unleashing a somehow *naïve*, "*bruitistic*" inferno of negativistic brilliance – this is an unsane *mesmerism* of the most brutal kind.

Maurizio Bianchi's *last* LP-release of 1982 (*Mectpyo Bacterium*, issued on the US-Label "*DYS*") is unfortunately still unknown to me<sup>15</sup>. The same goes for his first vinyl publication of '83 (*Das Testament*, issued in Italy on Mectpyo Sounds) which is also not at my hands<sup>16</sup>. I can only present Maurizio's liner notes as they go with these two long-players.

The accompanying text of the US-LP is describing things as follows:

"Mectpyo Bakterium, started in August 81, completed in October 81, is a work of implacable plastic exasperation. The icy oppression, the hallucinative electronic wounds, are a precious and singular fact in a technological society brought to the limit. The prototonic equipment guarantees a crude, shivering, wan and flamed sound that erases every mark of digression, pleasant or brilliant appearance, and is able to go up the vital knot of painful conscience. The emotion is pushed into dangerous zones, and unusual tensions free biological groans of extreme effectiveness. On back of these piercing elaborations, the figure of author and decomposer emerge as unique survivor of a world in extinction way."

"Mectpyo Bacterium comprises the tracks "Fetish Pinksha" and "Sterile Regels".

On the LP Das Testament the enclosed message of MB reads like this:

cries of countless agonised NON-SURVIVORS inside a creeping apocalypse!

"It should be an interest in perpetuating those institutions17 – they protect the

Addendum: Finally (July 1999) I have managed to listen to this work...: "Fetish Pinksha" comes as a rough and somehow peeling "aural wallpaper" – the piece is slowly rotating around an uncouth core, being full of frozen metals, getting drowned in spliced up fragments of a dissolute nature that become more and more entangled in shy ethereal harmonies. – On the other hand there is "Stérile Règels" – this track features a partially subdued, partially "drunken" / intoxicated excursion into the realms of slow motion beatbox rhythm; it conjures up a sonic climate that resembles a mechanised rainforest full of unreal lifeforms, full of shady fading creatures. So sum it all up...: Hallucinogenic comments about an ever-vanishing habitat are churned out here like the death

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Addendum: Due to the generosity of EC / MB I recently received a tape copy of *Das Testament* (July 1999). The first half of this work is exploring the devastating depths of pure echo effects; it's a grinding and abrasive reverberation of noise fragments that are attacking the hearing apparatus of the listener like constant detonations of sharp tiny shrapnel. The second half presents some slowly shifting "aural smears" meandering across a sonic bedrock that is composed by a statically throbbing rhythm box; as a final development the smearing sounds get some rhythm themselves until they are dynamically loaded and set out to compete with the beat box – both are at each other like two hostile snakes trying to entwine and overpower the respective adversary. This makes for a thrilling / drilling listening experience – truly persistent. In one word: *Screwdriver music*!

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The term "institution" is probably aiming at the independent record label Mectpyo Sounds where MB was able to release his *Testament* LP.

freedom of human choices, not only for today people but above all for those who will experiment their problems, in a different way, and they sure would not verify that we've already prevented, without need and wisdom, their choices and we spoilt their natural and social ambient."

Here my authentic perception of the AUTOLYTIC MUSIC by MB resumes its pace with Maurizio's second vinyl publication of 1983: It is the LP *The Plain Truth* – a long-playing record that was issued on the harsh Broken Flag label in England; then the psychotic home of such "ear-shatterers" like Ramleh or Consumer Electronics...

The Plain Truth is a rather quiet, slowly evolving work that presents itself to the listener without any obtrusiveness. On both sides of the long-player a whirring, somehow "illuminated" but nevertheless gloomy sound tapestry is prevailing. Here basically the same sonic ingredients are used as they can be found on the more brutal recordings of MB – but in the case of The Plain Truth these elements are arranged in a less "straining" manner which leads to the unfolding of a rather soft and clear aura of a mellowing finality.

Well – it would be unwise to assume here a certain "deteriorating" of MB's creative potential. The rather mild tendencies of Maurizio Bianchi's later compositions should not be mistaken as a step towards a policy of compromises that advocates the rise of "cosmic melodiousness" and the decline of the rough and uncouth confrontationism of his former industrial-technological disposition. It must be understood that a reduction of vehemence in artistic output must not necessarily result in a slackening of the impetus and efficacy of such a regulated and therefore less offensive expression.

Instead of that a demanding *subtlety* is taking over where beforehand a sheer brute force had cleared the way...!!! After MB's ultimate "scuffling" with the "superstructures" of mental lobotomy and rectification – as is relentlessly documented in his early tapes and vinyl – came a creeping, somehow ensnaring and soothing *infiltration of given facts*. This highly effective task was accomplished by the use of a "Trojan horse" made of a tolerable, subliminal flux of peacefully, nearly non-marital SOUND MELANGES that mollified any exploding noise in a sort of "neurotronic embedding".

In the liner notes of *The Plain Truth* it says: "*This record is dedicated to all the redeemed people*". Well... this dedication is quite interesting, as it probably pointed into future directions or even inevitabilities in the very course of MB's development as an obscure musician: Shall we regard this long-player as Maurizio's first exercise in an ataraxic devotion to this destiny? Did he already advocate the *redemption in hereafter* as the last remaining hope? Be it as it may... There is no easy solution to this enigma; *The Plain Truth* is a stubbornly mysterious record (the same goes for the two big Polaroids on the cover that are showing just blurred concoctions of colour). Face to face with this LP I have to avoid any further interpretation – I surrender! Just one thing can be taken for granted: By the evolutionary step of *The Plain Truth* Maurizio Bianchi disappeared again in a remoteness that only few people would be willing to catch with... In this very context MB gave the following declaration in cryptic nebulosity:

[The Plain Truth came out] "... while my period of transition has just started and terrible crises are already trying to undermine my psychic steadiness. I hope this won't lead me to commit deeds which would damage other people's sensibility, as I'm going to abandon darkness to embrace the brightness of a satisfying existence. I cannot be sure of this will be of use, but throughout our lives we need to try continuously new ways of keeping our spirit of renewal alive. The outside world is a strong influence, but our strength is to avoid being overcome by the temptations of the masses."

Maurizio's last two privately produced vinyl records (1983) were given the titles *Endometrio* and *Carcinosi*. The titles are referring to two types of sickness – on one hand to "Endometriosis" (a polymorphic, sometimes "wandering" proliferation of the mucous membrane within the uterus); and on the other hand to "Carcinoma" (the proliferation of cancer in various parts of the body). As the titles already suggest these two LPs should be seen in a *conceptual context* – this was also underlined by the fact that a certain part of the circulation of these records had been published together in one double album...

Endometrio came up with an obvious consanguinity to the horrendous Symphony For A Genocide album – this LP, although a little bit softer than SFAG, must be regarded as a further relapse into a vortex of an unseen light that has been totally engulfed by darkness.

Carcinosi does exactly the same thing as its "twin brother" – it is only slightly less gloomy than *Endometrio*; but that does not weaken the speechless intensity of this ominous record. This is music for imploding people!

Both long-players are packaged in plainly styled covers – just one small b/w Polaroid photograph is shown on the back and front cover of each record... The pictures are heavily blurred and therefore the images remain unrecognisable. Some explaining texts in Italian are printed on the covers. Here are two excerpts 18:

"...the Bionic Music<sup>19</sup> rejects intransigently any sort of neo-avantgardism or neo-poetics of the object, to affirm the reasons of a deep bionic / human & physiologic / evolutive engagement..."

"Today, everyone imagines Oswiecim-Brzezinka<sup>20</sup> – knowing that it is part of the bad conscience of man, because this tremendous crime had been done by man. And man knows that he, under certain circumstances, is able to invent more Oswiecim-Brzezinka."

It is worth mentioning that both LPs are subtitled: *Endometrio* is described as a "Decomposition for scientific sounds and electronically created rumbling"; Carcinosi is called "Decomposition for bionic organisms and concrete mutations".

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Translation by Giancarlo Toniutti.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> By using this term MB described his sound concept on both *Endometrio* and *Carcinosi*. The term was possibly related to a sort of "bio(electro)nic" music that creates "micro-organismic" soundscapes by a synthetic manipulation and looped transformation of "pre-recorded material".

<sup>20</sup> This is a Polish word – it means "Auschwitz-Birkenau"

In the year 1984 Maurizio's last LP appeared during the active course of his creativity as a composer<sup>21</sup>: It was meant to be a soundtrack to a planned film by MB that never materialised. The record was entitled *Armaghedon* – it refers to a biblical place where – according to a prophecy in the Old Testament – the dawn of the apocalypse will happen in the shape of the last huge battle between hostile humans... *Armaghedon* (with the depiction of some peculiar "icy leaves" on the cover) turns out to be an adequate reprise / extension of the rather soft sound streams that are a characteristic of Maurizio's former LP *The Plain Truth* (1983). Some passages of *Armaghedon* might be seen as a somehow cautious but nevertheless successful reminiscence of MB to the electronic music by Klaus Schulze during his grandiose *Mirage* period (1977).

What do we have to think about these two MB long-players of the years '83 and '84? Are they to be seen in a *religious* context? Do they have the relevance of a *true confession* of faith that finally materialised in the mind of MB? Or is it even a tacit and exclusively sonic REVELATION of Maurizio's conversion into a Jehovah Witness? Here again any further information is lacking both on the long-players and their covers – leading to the makeshift of pure speculation...

As a matter of fact Maurizio Bianchi suddenly retired from his former musical activities at the end of 1983.

In a letter of the same year MB wrote to the label Subterranean Records (USA):

"The end is very near, and we have a very short time to recognise our mistakes and to redeem ourselves... I stopped doing music, and now my life is going towards its full awareness."

The definite reasons for MB's retreat into silence are not obvious at all. One may image that he was "blessed" with a physical or psychic / mental handicap that functioned as the actual breeding ground for his obscure creativity. After several years of harsh paroxysms he probably reached a crucial turning point where he had to make an important decision: Either he overcomes his mental misery (a step which often makes any further creativity redundant for the sake of "normality") – or his mental misery overcomes him by devouring all his vitality (which would be equivalent to a silent demise in isolated seclusion)... The musician G.X. Jupitter-Larsen, who met MB in 1983, put it that way: "(He would) just sit in his room. Waiting for biology to stop. Waiting for atoms to die." – Finally MB chose to survive.

In 1992 some retrospective material of MB was issued by the USA-based labels Banned Production and Zabriskie Point on two "posthumous" vinyl long-players. The recordings that were used for these releases had partially been issued a decade ago on some obscure and rare audio cassettes or international tape/vinyl samplers.

Some excerpts of the *Industrial Murder / Menstrual Bleeding* LP originally appeared in 1982 on a compilation called *Nowhere To Play* that had been published by the US group The Haters (re. G.X. Jupitter-Larsen). The sonic

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> After that a long "silence" in the musical cosmos of MB prevailed – it lasted for 13 years. The next album that did not contain just retrospective material was issued by MB no earlier than 1997 (*Colori*).

quintessence of this vinyl album is based on dense, cascadic *noise walls* emerging from the throbbing background of a dry and subdued beatbox.

The second LP – *Aktivitat* – depicts on its cover an inverse photography of a "*hibakusha*" – that is a scar-stained survivor of the *flame and radiation-horror* of Hiroshima during ATOMDAY, 6th of August 1945<sup>22</sup>..

Aktivitat is divided into four parts – two on each side of the record: Here again there is a cluster-like staccato of a *rhythm machine* chugging relentlessly along, forcing its sounds into the ears of the listener – this is the electro-percussive *basis* of a sluggish, sometime *pulsating* FLOOD OF NOISE that consists of streaky subliminal sounds and voices – theses streaks are extending into a partially *arrhythmic* darkness that is mounting in a hardly tolerable intensity. Similar sonic "scrubbings" were previously to be heard only on *Mörder Unter Uns*.

These two long-players of 1992 must be seen as belated, if not "posthumous" publications that unveil some further areas from the MB noise cosmos – but as such the LPs cannot add something really new or relevant to the "legacy" of this (then) solitary man from Milano; however they are to be understood as important documents about the reverberating and lasting impact of MB: As a matter of fact they still illustrate after so many years the unmatched uniqueness of Maurizio Bianchi. Despite of his (forced or voluntary?) exit from the realms of neurotic-neurotronic SOUND FORGING in 1984 his obscure importance as an "industrial ground-breaker" is unrivalled till today.

In the course of the 90s even *more* older, partially "bootleg-like" releases and rereleases from the crucial years of MB were spilled onto European and American grounds... – these products were vinyl and audio tapes of dubious origin – issued by some allegedly *non-authorised* persons or labels from Italy or elsewhere (that is Produktion and Murder Release).

In the following I will present a set of short reviews about these curious items:

Let's start with the MB-tape *Lebensraum*... It contains various spliced tone fragments that are either based on "anti-musics" by Maurizio Bianchi or on some interwoven "spoken word"-elements: On the A-Side these words are uttered by Jordi Valls (then the "manager" of Whitehouse) who is heard announcing a video project of Come Organisation about serial killers like Peter Kürten etc. This recording is probably taken from an interview that took place in 1982 or 1983. On the other side of the tape the listener gets confronted with a bunch of *shittish brown NAZIS* doing some speeches in front of applauding audiences: Amongst these agitators propaganda-chief Josef Goebbels is to be heard – but also some

collecting money from passers-by who were allowed to take photos of him. This behaviour was based on two reasons...: Firstly Kikkawa would not get a decent job to earn a living for his many scars and keloids disfigured his appearance — secondly he saw his fate as a chance to *insert* himself into the public as a living memory and horrific warning about the deadly storms of the atom bomb. — After several years of slight successes on his crusade — not at least amongst

 $^{22}$  The man on the cover – he was photographed 1947 showing his naked back – was a Japanese

called K. Kikkawa. Contrary to most other "hibakushas" who hid in their homes and were ashamed of presenting their wounds, Kikkawa developed a sheer *self-confidence* of his own trauma...!!! So he did not avoid publicity but was longing to *get it* at the kerb of the dusty streets of Hiroshima by collecting money from passers-by who were allowed to take photos of him. This behaviour was

provincial faceless *gasbags* are included here: They feverishly try to praise the pathetic "*merits*" of the mass-psychotic National Socialism in the late 30s... unless they finally pass over the microphone to the Chaplin-esque "Führer und Reichskanzler" *himself*! Well – this tape is both *upsetting* and *off-putting* any decent listener.

Here I carry on with *Noise-O-Rama* which is as *dubiously* spliced together as *Lebensraum*. This C-90-cassette should be regarded as a worthwhile collection of "highlights" from various MB-compositions of the early 80s: Not only contributions of Maurizio to diverse tape- and vinyl-samplers are included here – the tape is also garnished with *excerpts and reworkings* from some tracks of his *official* long-players.

A similar function as a "synopsis of compilation tracks" is also fulfilled by the *Atomique-Mörder* tape that is reputed to have been released by MB himself in 1981 or 1982 in a very small circulation (probably 70 copies only)<sup>23</sup>. Here some inconsistent sound experiments are to be heard – partially dating back to MB's Sacher-Pelz-style of the year 1979. Some of them later appeared in a more "mature" form on MB's officially "catalogued" works (for example a third recollage of Kraftwerk's "Mitternacht"!), whereas other experiments just seem to be early hypnotic or nerve-shattering "out-takes" that are presented here for the very first time...

The definitive *last* sound storage medium by Maurizio Bianchi's that I portray here in this essay is simply and cryptically entitled *NHHN*. It was released in 1981 in cassette format on the Belgian label Grafika Airlines – like with *Atomique-Mörder* I do not own the tape, but only a vinyl re-pressing as Bootleg-LP. The music on *NHHN* is a sonic etude of a total and feverish futility that is *alternating* between depression, hope and even subdued rebellion.

As a conclusion of all this here is MB again in his own words:

"My music, for example, comes directly from frustration and contradiction – surely I cannot define it – it's conceived with dramatic insistence, with emotional irrationality, with hysterical scission, with schizophrenic energy and madness."

"I cannot define 'Industrial Music' or any other kind of music / noise / sound – this is because it comes from strictly personal feelings, and that feeling is a nervous statement you cannot define by words, but only by sounds – every music has its mood and it's indescribable by words."

"The future is not so bad, but we need to paint it very catastrophic, because we are very masochists and we like to suffer the pessimistic future – this is in our human characteristics – it's inevitable and natural."

"Yes – my music is really affected by the wearing solitude in which I live – I'm really alone, you know, and the oppression of my neurotic crisis gives me the ideal inspiration to develop my sounds – without it, my creativity should be dead... and I too."

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 $<sup>^{23}</sup>$  I do not have this tape. All I could obtain was a rather slipshod pirate copy of it on vinyl released by Produktion in Italy.

"In this music are expressed my frustrations in life, in love, in religion, in politics, in death."

"I'm oppressed / fascinated by images of destruction / murders / genocides / lagers / factories / porno-sexes / tortures / human afflictions, etc., not because I'm a violent, but because I identify myself, my life, my attitude, my soul, my brain, my nerves in all these furious images – and I understand I'm part of these impartial pains – maybe someone thinks I'm a masochist – I don't know – I know I'm anti-conformist and anti-social, and every day my struggle is very hard and sometimes I risk to be overcome by institutional laws – but I help myself with these images, they give me a real distribution of energy – and passion."

"I'm not political at all. I'm a nihilist. But I think every kind of authoritarian government is very harmful for the human creativity and universal freedom."

"The contrary forces to freedom are too powerful, and we'll not stand up long, but it is always our duty to do what's possible to resist."

"For the immediate future, the primitive protest will invest industrial contingent. The technological development is doomed to fail in favour of prehistoric revolution."

"There is no degradation and turpitude in this giving oneself up to natural laws and individual instinct with a primitive spontaneity, but a rebellion to the aberranting superstructures that suffocate in conformism, the human creative instinct."

"Here the situation has degenerated and the sonorities of the apocalypse have overcome. While expecting the end, people do not realise their own superficiality and they are dominated by the dishonesty of their own egoism. Even those who will not survive at the end will be able so see and be aware..."

"Das Testament was announced as 'my last record' – in fact, from now on I'll be working on a total project involving not only the musical aspect. Apart from that, I need a period of meditation to become aware of my humanitarian and sentimental concepts. The acquisition of my real function in a world condemned to die out – it's really the beginning of the end and I feel it on my skin, in my soul, deep in my mind."

"I understand the superficiality of (the) normal way of life. I hate all those (who) think they are the best, the super-guys! They seem so stupid and weak together (with) their ignorance..."

"My life and my sound are changing. But I don't want to become useless like T.G., Psychic TV and others – the things I'm doing aren't controlled by the power, but come from my inner soul."

#### MAURIZIO BIANCHI... who is he...?

Just a patinated "epitaph" of an eclipsed resistance against the indescribability of present things?

Or let's put it that way:

Question: "What groups would you call influences on your music?"

**MB:** "No groups or artists – just the human ignorance."

#### NOTES:

Some basic info and sound storage media on / by MB were used in the production of this text. The respective items were made by or came from the following individuals:

Banned Production (G.X. Jupitter-Larsen), Anonimo Eporediese, Vittore Baroni, Datenverarbeitung (Andreas Müller), Artware (Donna Klemm), Walter Ulbricht Schallfolien (Uli Rehberg), Dark Vinyl (Uwe Höhn), "Interim Report" (Suzuki Shunya), Giancarlo Toniutti, Come Organisation (William Bennett), Algha Marghen / Ees'T Records (Emanuele Carcano).

and of course...

Maurizio Bianchi

This essay was written by...

### **Stephan Kraus**

### Germany, September 1997

(Reworking and translation from the German by Stephan Kraus, April 1999 Addendum for *Mectpyo Bakterium* and *Das Testament* written in July 1999) (Final revision by Maurizio Bianchi)

### SOME QUESTIONS TO MB...

Stephan Kraus, 1999

How to connect the *Archeo* phase of MB ('79 to '84) to your current kind of music (*Colori, First Day / Last Day*)? Do you see any link / development concerning these two periods – or are they just two separate blocks of expression that should not be intertwined?

In the early period I imagined to be free from the system of things, but unaware I was slave to my own idolatry. I was in the web of my own sounds and nightmares. In opposite, now I feel really *free* to express my *real* internality – and the current works are proof of this.

The images and topics of your Archeo recordings were stark and clear in their negativism – it was nearly impossible to misunderstand your "industrialised" message. Colori and First Day / Last Day are totally different in that respect – they are rather blurred and shady concerning their considerations: the musical content may be easier to access than your Archeo material – but the views and expressions offered herein are hard to interpret.

Was it your intention to do something *more mysterious* in the late 90s when everything gets "explained", "categorised" and "available"? Are your current works really to be seen as a "final music" of religious redemption without the term "industrial" sandwiched in between?

The current way to intend my *music* is not only *music* but is emotion, feeling, meditation, maturity, preaching, way of life, evolution, sacrifice, introspection... I don't like the *dockets*, so please don't mention them, but please consider only the human redemption as a way to be conscious of our conscience.

One of the most obscure recordings in your early phase were Extreme Man 1 and Extreme Man 2. I regard them as the most effective sonic exorcisms ever committed to magnetic tape. Unfortunately I have virtually no background info about these two companion cassettes. Are they official releases? Or have they been issued by some bootleg outlets without your knowledge / consent?

They are *not* official releases. They've been issued *without* my consent!

Some of your early cassettes have been re-released in the 90s by MURDER RELEASE in Italy. Do you have something to do with them? Or did they publish your stuff without your knowledge / consent?

I have *nothing* to do with them: You're right: they publish the stuff *without* my knowledge or consent! But I don't hate them for this...

In my opinion true creativity cannot last longer than – say – five years. At a stretch or as the sum total of an entire life – basically after half a decade of expression all things are said and done and reiteration or (self-)plagiarism are kicking in. What do you think of that view? Should one try to extend his or her creative output at any cost even to the danger of diluting it? Or would it be advisable to stop it as soon as it becomes stale and watered down?

The *true creativity* comes out only when you're aware to have found yourself. Before that, it is only research and experiment (like the *ARCHEO* period), but

really is not *yourself*, but is something you *believe to be*, while you are another entity.

In that respect I like to know your opinion about the MUSICS of today. Supposing there is this magical "five-years-barrier" of creativity – what do you then think of folks that are still engaged in this "industrial" thing, often claiming to have moulded it by and for themselves without even mentioning the "first wave" of the COLD WAVE (TG, CV, SPK, NE, MB etc.) as their obvious mentors?

I've nothing to do about music of today, because simply I don't like it. The so-called COLD WAVE or the so-called "industrial" is only a decayed past – and we can't live always thinking about the past, otherwise we risk to fossilise our emotions.

### What further plans / projects / ideas do you have in mind concerning your future activities on private and / or artistic grounds?

My plans are to put always the spiritual interests at the top, and the music remains as a background to express my *full creativity*.

### Is there any future? If yes - for how long and in what shape will it be?

Yes, there is a *future*, but not in the mood of the human beings. Only Jehovah God knows about the future and He revealed it to us in his written inspired Word (the Holy Scriptures), and, trust me, it will be much better than we think about. The problem is that we don't want to listen to Him because we think we are God!

### Any fears left? Anything else to say?

I've just started to work in a new project which is further evidence of my full creativity.

### What will happen on 11<sup>th</sup> August 1999? (*To be answered till August the 10<sup>th</sup>, of course!*)

Really, I don't know. These kind of groundless assumption are useless.

## NIGEL AYERS (NOCTURNAL EMISSIONS, STERILE RECORDS)

As told to Dan Fleming, 1999

Maurizio Bianchi's work has been resurfacing lately, mostly on bootlegs, tell me about your involvement with him.

Nigel Ayers: I hear talk of a MB *Mectpyo* LP which has been dated "1979" – it has to be a later bootleg.

I was in regular correspondence with Maurizio Bianchi -MB- between around 79 and 82. After a two-inch UK write-up by Dave Henderson in Sounds, he reached the pinnacle of his fame, saw the light and joined the Jehovah's Witnesses. I never heard from him since.

I seemed like he produced on average a 60 minute cassette a week, over those years including one I remember called *Mektpyo Blut* which is bad Polish for "menstrual blood". I think this is where the title for this bootleg came from.

I never heard any mention of him doing any LP releases prior to 1981 -tracks on compilations, maybe. From what I recall, he worked in total obscurity at his mother's house on a two-track tape machine and a Korg MS20.

Strange as it may seem to today's hoards of rune-swinging combat-trouser wearers, there was absolutely ZERO interest in his work from ANYONE previous to this.

I very much doubt if he had any other "releases" that weren't cassette-demo-only. These would have been in editions of no more than four or five which were sent to the few hardcore noisemakers there were in that days who might show a modicum of interest – Nocturnal Emissions, SPK, Lustmord, Vittore Baroni, Whitehouse, Throbbing Gristle, and maybe a handful of others-.

Maurizio's tapes weren't exactly eagerly awaited or taken very seriously. Many of us "post-industrialists" enjoyed making noise – especially doing it publicly as part of an overall -anti-capitalist and/or self-promotional- campaign. Sitting at home listening to other people's bedroom doodlings wasn't really our idea of fun. But Maurizio was a great enthusiast for other's work, and he wrote things for the Italian music press, he was a good networker and we were all such desperate media whores...you know how it goes...

Correct me if I'm wrong, but to the best of my information *Symphony For A Genocide* on Sterile Records was his first LP release, in 1981. He gave me most of the money to do it. He was a friend and I was going to the pressing plant anyway so what the hell?

MB also lined up the Liebstandart SS MB release about the same time with William Bennett's Come Org.

William Bennett told me – in 81, the first and last time I met him – that Steve Stapleton drew up a "joke" contract for him giving Maurizio absolutely no rights to the recording in any way whatever ever, which Maurizio happily signed. Bennett added overdubs of Hitler speeches, Nazi martial music etc. from one of those tapes they used to sell at the lunatic right wing shops.

Apparently Maurizio used to hang around with Milan Red Brigades, but he didn't really care about the silly Nazi stuff so long as his records came out.

I should also think Maurizio was also very unlikely to complain about any bootlegs – unlike other comrades who may have a more rigid attitude towards such bourgeois concepts as "quality control".

It looks like he made a good career move by giving up the music. Now his work is far more popular than it ever was when he was active.

A good lesson for many of today's noisemakers: Just terminate the project – you know it makes sense!

### INTERVIEW BY TINY TOVE, 2003

The history of industrial/noise music is rooted in the end of 70s. During this time passed by, generations were changed, and life was changed too. But there are still many people who are into noise music very much, and who try to make it on their own. Now, we can't avoid the proper influence from the outside, because there are so much noise bands around. When you started back in early 80s, you felt completely different. No clichés, no proved ways, no scene. Can you tell us about your very first impulses which turned you to this dark musical terrain? Were your first musical attempts documented? I came from the Punk experience, it was circa 1976/78 and I was involved in the reaction against an inhuman and conformist society. The same spirit trained my music path, drift towards the disintegration of pre-manufactured sounds and the achievement of my musical independence, far away by mass-media cliché and music business. My first musical attempts were never being documented, in fact at that time (76/78) I started my first experiments with an acoustic guitar but I never recorded anything, so they are concealed in my archaic memory.

### Did you communicate with other musicians in those early days? Can you remember other projects you liked then?

I was in contact with Nigel Ayers from Nocturnal Emissions, William Bennett from Come Org., Masami Akita (later Merzbow), Philippe Fichot, Michael Nguyen and few others which I don't remember now. At the time, I was mainly interested in composing soundtracks (*Moerder Unter Uns* and *Armagheddon*) but at the end those plans have vanished into oblivion.

# Almost all your albums were produced and released on your own. Why? You were not interested in getting in touch with labels, or not satisfied with the way the scene worked?

Disco music ruled the world from 1975 through 1982, as well in Italy (along with pop and new wave) therefore the experimentation in music was amorphous and sterile. Record labels used to produce conventional pre-manufactured bands and there was no space for something diverse and truly different. That's why I decided to self-produce my music – it also gave me the opportunity to achieve the best freedom; acting outside from music industry circuits I had chance to create my own music, something I really would like to do without any pressures.

# How did you managed to spread/distribute your music? In early 90s, many MB albums were re-released on tapes (by Murder Release and Banned Production labels) and even on vinyl (Aktivitat on Zabriskie Point). They seem to be bootlegs or not?

Through alternative distribution circuits and contacts with other musicians and supporters in the whole world, above all I received a good help by Sterile Records, Aeon Records and Broken Flag Records. Those re-prints are unauthorised bootlegs, so don't buy unauthorised "bootlegs" and discourage others from doing these, unscrupulous business practices

### Can you speak about technical equipment you used, and more detailed about your methods of composition?

At the time of Sacher Pelz I just used a turntable and some vinyl LPs to make loops, reverberations, then, using a tape recorder I mixed all with other concrete sounds. As MB I bought a Korg synthesizer and I also found one of these synthy machines on the second-hand market, those used by Cosmic Couriers (!) then a Roland KS20 rhythm-box, an Echo-box and a two-track tape machine. I have composed my music creating a first track and then overlapping another recorded track thus producing the desired result.

### Please tell me something about Sacher Pelz and Nun. Were they your sideprojects? If yes, where was the difference? If not, please explain your relation with them.

I never heard of Nun, so I've no relation with him, while Sacher Pelz represent my first attempts with concrete experimental music, under that name I made four works recently re-issued in a four CD box titled 'mutation for a continuity' on Ees't label

# Your first works were devoted to the power of industrial technology and its dehumanisation of society. From your current point of view, why this subject, being initially conceived as the instrument for creation, became the symbol of destruction in those days?

Because men are not able to take the technology under control, so they can't control the developments in the long term. The consequences could turn out catastrophic, as it happened for example with pollution: in the beginning the industrial civilization seemed to offer well-being and happiness to its technological adepts, but to the detriment to the atmosphere. When it has been realized that the industrial civilization requires disrupting the living conditions of the same habitat in which its sons would supposed to live in ideal conditions, it was too late, unfortunately.

Where is the barrier between the ideology and music? There were (and are) many musicians which put into their works completely different ideas, when the resulting music can be quite similar. On the other hand, industrialisation can also inspire people in the positive way: technocracy, total computer control, it brings up the music which calls the people to walk in line and work like the machine – techno, ebm, various rhythmic styles

...A barrier does not exist, there are just similarities. Nowadays the prevailing ideology is consumerism, and the music that springs is music for consumers, it lasts throughout a season and that's all. On the other hand, there is a music which is the opposite way to consumerism, able to survive the time, and even after years it results actual. Why? For the simple reason that the author/manipulator of similar kind of music constantly tends towards a creative act, in his microcosm the artist is able to re-create a music that is out of time, dilated in it to come, until the future will come; this is why his project resists in the long run.

Why did you abandon your music activity in the mid 80s? Except the religious issues, which are too personal thing to speak widely about, can you explain your retirement or disappointment, your feelings and memories in

### those difficult days?

For the simple reason that, by now I said everything I had to express, and before running the risk to sink in a sterile repetition or in a vain parody of myself, I retired to devote my time and energy to funding research in my inwardness, my feelings, my spirituality; at the time I haven't had found a real aim (and music is just part of it) which is to consider my spiritual need and try to find my complete equilibrium.

For many people, it was really great surprise when you came back to music after 14 years of enigmatic absence. I know only one album which were released then, *Colori*, it musically describes your path in very a contrast way, symbolized by colours. Why was it necessary for you to put this conclusion to the audience?

As the liner notes say, after a 14 years of meditative pause, I am back to music now describing my coloured sphere in a world sadly painted in black and white. *Colori* represents my genuine feeling turned to sonorous landscapes, near to be imperceptibles but discretely real. *Colori* is the first chapter of the trilogy that includes *First Day/Last Day* and *Dates*, musical water-colours of gloomy dyes that perpetuate my thirst for spirituality (not to be confused with mysticism). With my last works (*Frammenti* and *Antarctic Mosaic*, both released by Ee'st) I'm partially back to fragmentary suggestions of my early experiments.

As the continuation of previous question, let me know your attitude with massive re-edition of your early works, released on CDs by Alga Marghen Records. Was it initiated only by this label? Why did you support this idea? I agreed with the official re-release. Emanuele Carcano (of Alga Marghen) found me after a long troubled search, and pointed me out a return, that's why my early experimental layout was gaining general consents. It gives me new vital energy, and the rest is just recent history...

The most "recent" MB album I've heard was MB plays Clockwork Orange. It's one of my favourite films, I am interested to know your meaning about this film and the idea behind the album.

Emanuele Carcano had this release thanks to mail-artist Vittore Baroni, and when I've been noticed about the re-release I started being very curious to listen to it, as I completely forgot about this old tape realized in 1980. It returns my mind back to the existentialist background of that movie. Probably, contorting the original soundtrack, I have rejected the ghosts of a technology which tries to inculcate lifestyles, preconceived ideas or useless modules in his interlocutors, so nobody would refuse to conform his existence to pre-established models.

### Are you interested in making music nowadays? What the leading interests you have now?

Nowadays I'm still involved in composing and decomposing music. I've started a collaboration with the German duo Telepherique for a project focused on uselessness of time's calculation compared to the precision of time itself – Zehn Tage will be published at the end of the year.

Rumours said that you became one of Jehovah's Witness. On my very profane level, I just came to the conclusion that the faith is the only thing the single human can own. Besides the faith, we probably have nothing, simply NOTHING. Growing up in an atheistic country, which Russia became to be in the communist era, I had nothing to do with religion, and now I am going to revise my system of values. I can't know anything about Jehovah's Witness, but I would like to ask you about this movement - maybe nothing personal but the truth which can't be found easily in these days of total confusion. Bearing in mind that this is not a religious propaganda oriented on a way of sullen proselytism. It is just the pure expression of my hidden, deep inner life. The nonconformism of the Jehovah's Witnesses, or, better, this form of adoration appealed me from the beginning. Considering also that it is based just on God spell, it's devoid of ideologies, philosophies, theologies and the harmful doctrines that almost every religion use to make its disciples swallow. As Christ said (the true leader of the Jehovah's movement) in a famous sentence: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" [John 8.32]. Thanks to the bible, I have refused many false traditions, Jehovah's Witnesses do not celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, birthdays, or any other holidays (save one, the Memorial of Christ's Death during Passover). They believe these celebrations grew out of ancient false religions. I relieved my past blames committed by ignorance, as I didn't know the truth, and now I feel like a dove flying toward the freedom, the real freedom which is the faculty of exercise my free will.

### INTERVIEW BY OFER VAYNER, 2006

Back in 1979 noise wasn't what it is today; there weren't organizations (or rather pseudo-organizations) like Mothers Against Noise, or as many noise makers to provoke the all American mother, there was no Myspace, no Forums, no weblabels, and in fact no home computers with an internet connection.

Maurizio Bianchi, originating from Milan, is a pioneer in terms of noise; he started in 1979 under the alias Sacher-Pelz, went on to release edited speeches of Nazi leaders (for artistic use) under the name Leibstandarte SS MB and continued releasing albums both under those names and under his own name (or under MB) until 1984 when he became Christian.

Up until 1997 there weren't any releases by Bianchi, but from 1998 and to this very day Bianchi is an active noise maker.

I had the rare opportunity to ask him some questions, hoping to introduce and further know his intriguing personality and music to anyone who finds it interesting

### First of all, introduce yourself and your work

I'm a non-musician in activity since August 1979, except a long hiatus between 1984 and 1997. I'm used to work in the experimental field because it's the only one I can express my freedom completely in researching emotional sound sculptures.

### Which of your albums/projects would you recommend those who are unfamiliar with your work to start with?

From the early period I recommend Symphony For A Genocide, Mectpyo Bakterium and Carcinosi; about the last, works like Mind Us Trial, Niddah Emmhna and The Testamentary Corridor are more representative.

### How did you start making music?

I started on August 1979 in Milan with the pseudonym of Sacher-Pelz, just using a long-playing recorder and some used long playings, manipulating them with loops, scratches, noises, crumbling them until to be unrecognizable from the originals. It was a sort of defragmentation of usual music into several atoms of unusual non-music. Later, from 1980, I introduced the synthetic sounds and a rhythms-machine, and in the end (from 1983) an echoes-machine with a microphone.

### What messages/feeling are you trying to provoke with your music?

The uncompromising message is very clear and the inner feelings are so intense that the listener seems to make a fascinating journey in his own mind paths.

### How would you define the music you make?

I can define it as psycho-neurotic sound.

### Where do you get inspiration from?

I get inspiration from the concrete music of the 50's and the German electroacoustic/electronic music of early 70's, but probably my main inspiration is the human alienation.

### Do you have any professional musical training?

Not at all! Even I don't know how the read the seven traditional notes of the stave.

# You've collaborated with many artists – with which did you enjoy working the most? And what is the album you're most satisfied with from those collaborations?

Yes, recently I've collaborated with more than ten artists and groups and I've enjoyed with all of them! And there is not a particular album I'm more satisfied than the others. Maybe I'm a little bit diplomatic?

### Do you feel more comfortable working alone or collaborating with other artists?

It's a different point of view, because alone I can decide and determine by myself everything, but when we're two or more, there is to take care of the opinions, decisions, etc. of your collaborators, and respect their decisions and their suggestions; but until now I found a very good co-operation and I take the opportunity to thank very much all of them for their precious and faithful support.

### What albums are you currently listening to?

Currently I'm not listening to any albums, but only the radio programs coming from the foreign states, because I can be aware of the musical kaleidoscope is surrounding me. It's really great!

### What is your opinion on the today's music in general?

Today's music in general is very fragile and superficial. Even in the avant-gardist field, only very few people are keeping the genuine experimentation flag high.

# In your opinion, where do you stand as an artist? Do you see yourself as an underground artist? As an alternative to the mainstream? Where would you place yourself on a schematic sketch of the music world?

I can see myself as an underground/alternative/non-conformist artist, but it's only my personal thought; probably from the outside the critics would define me in another way. Anyhow, I don't know exactly where to place myself, maybe in another dimension?

# I've read in other interviews that you're pretty unknown in your homeland (Italy) – are you pleased with this or would you rather it was a different way? That's right, but I'm not worried about this, even because in my homeland there is the melodic/traditional culture and I don't feel a need be part of this even though I'm living beside it.

### From digging into your biography I've found that you haven't released any albums between 1992 and 1998, what are the reasons for this?

To tell the truth, I remained absent from the scenes from 1984 until the 1997, and

the reasons are that I had already expressed all my own creativity, and to avoid useless repetitions I preferred to stop everything with music, but not in life because on 1984 I became a true Christian and my life was lightened by the God's eternal Word!

### What made you go back to composing and releasing albums?

The awareness to open a new chapter in my experimental history, more intimate and careful.

### What made you decide to do an album like *Blut und Nebel*, which consists mostly of remixes?

To move against the mainstream, rediscovering hidden sounds filtered with the current spiritual maturity, and the final result is very exciting!

### What was the work process on it like? How did you feel about re-working on your older materials?

The process was initially to create some looped effects, after re-treated and electronically filtered with Sandro Kaiser's devices, in order to obtain a velvety effect, very suggestive. I must admit that when I re-worked with such old materials I felt certain restlessness, due probably to hidden ghosts that tried to reoccur, but now I'm feeling completely satisfied.

### Do you work on digital or analog equipment these days? Do you miss the times when it was completely analog?

In the present I work completely with very simple and Spartan analogical equipment, and those epic times remained forever in my mind...One way or another it was a "poetic" age.

### What equipment are you currently working with?

With a cassette-tape with microphone incorporated, a DVD-player machine with some special functions and a lot of creativity.

### Do you have any other interests besides music?

I'm completely involved in religion, but not the traditional one, so empty and futile, and I like to do abstract photographs to use for my albums.

#### What are your plans for the rest of 2006?

There are collaborations just started with Maor Appelbaum, Matteo/ Hue Uggeri, Claudio Rocchetti, Crìa Cuervos, Saverio Evangelista of Esplendor Geometrico, Emanuela de Angelis, Land Use, Craig Hilton, etc.; concerning my solo projects, there are enough projects ready for the next autumn. So, I'm very very busy but I don't complain because to stay active is the best thing to do against modern boredom, the dangerous root of all the misdeeds and the injustices.

### In your opinion, what is the most important historical event that happened during your life so far?

The most historical event is very close to come... Please read the liner notes of the 603... Annus Mundi freeload album.

### Do you consider yourself an artist working only for his own good or do you try to push and encourage other artists/bands/projects as well?

I prefer the second option, but being so imperfect I'm not able to do it completely... sorry.

### Are you familiar with any Israeli noise/drone/industrial artists?

I know only my friend Maor Appelbaum and the people at Tophet Prophet label. That's all.

#### Final words?

I don't want to become popular or acclaimed, but I'd like to awaken the sleeping consciences. Then I'll come back to my enlightened subterraneans...

Thank you.

# INTERVIEW BY MARCELO AGUIRRE, 2007

In recent times, there has been an amazing amount of re-editions and new releases by the elusive Italian meister. Deservedly. His ominous soundscapes cover a big area, from bleak to atmospheric and sedating.

This interview was conducted through email in two sessions after the release of the 5 LP box *M.B. Archives* in 2006 on German label Vinyl on Demand, which I reviewed for the monthly webzine *Paris Transatlantic*.

### First and foremost, what moved you to start doing your own sound work? Please add comments about your musical background, related interests, and the music you were listening at the time.

Maurizio Bianchi: The purpose was to leave a fermentative trace on history after my departure. An epileptic seed on this moribund society. My musical background was beat music, decadent music, cosmic music, punk, electro-pop, and noise.

As for related interests, photographs. I was listening to electronic/electroacoustic/experimental/contemporary music.

#### How was the social and cultural climate in Italy when you started?

The social culture was in the deepest boredom and the masses were submerged by the conventional clichés.

### Would you comment on your rumoured proximity to the Brigate Rosse at that time?

It's purely false. I never have been involved in any politics because I hate it.

# Where other artists doing things you related to, or others you got to know afterwards with whom you felt sympathy?

There was nobody to whom I related. By the way, I was in touch with Monte Cazazza, Genesis P-Orridge, Konrad Schnitzler, Nigel Ayers, and others, but without getting influenced by their way of life.

#### Could you specify where the moniker Sacher Pelz comes from?

It comes from a Sacher Masoch novel titled *Venus im Pelz*, celebrating the masochistic apotheosis of the modern victims.

# Could you introduce the modus operandi of that project and why you changed to your own name after a series of tapes?

I started using pre-recorded tracks and then modifying, maltreating them until they became an unrecognizable mash. There was a sort of poetic view, a precession of human superficiality with adding some mind lobotomy due to the social useless. I changed the name because there was a dramatic evolution in my musical approach and to disseminate my own personality.

# It is said that your work evoked the proceedings, but more accurately the sound of 50's musique concrète from your first stages onwards. How much were you aware of that, and how do you see that now?

I was completely unaware of this, even if I listened in the second half of the seventies to some works by Henry, Schaeffer, Ferrari and others; now I can define such similarities as a degenerative coincidence.

# You also released records under the name of Leibstandarte SS MB, flirting with German, Nazi drenched imagery, which seemed a common interest or shock tactic prevalent in the industrial culture. Could you comment on what were your own ties to that, including to Industrial Culture?

The correct sentence is that the Come Org crew released such records after promising me an imaginary gratification... my ties with Industrial Culture were only through the horrifying visuals, nothing else, because my philosophy was very personal and obscured by distressed existentialism.

# There is little information on the luxurious 5 LP box Vinyl on Demand released this year, which unites all tapes you released under your own name. Could you give a glimpse on its proceedings?

Practically, with the precious help of faithful friends like Siegmar Fricke, Stephan Kraus, David Van Ravesteijn and others, I obtained the re-mastering of my oldest tapes and some other works edited after my abandonment. I sent all to Frank at VOD and then he did a strong work making everything ready!

Although your music has now taken another direction, you are interested in re-releasing your earlier work. What is the value you find in it?

It is simply an affective value. Nothing more.

# By making these recordings newly available, it could be understood that you don't reject your past?

Not totally because on the ashes of my past I've constructed my grazed present, waiting for the imponderable future.

# At some point you mentioned being a "de-composer" as you weren't a (trained) composer. What were you referring to?

It's a sort of description of my composition planning out. I prefer to use already generated sources, interacting with them to create a sort of magmatic polarization.

# It would be interesting to know how your instrumentation and work methods evolved from the first stage. Did you achieve a compositional method after a while?

After having used analogue/synthetic equipment, step-by-step I came to my early experiments' approach related to more unconventional sources.

#### Could you specify?

In fact I'm currently using a simple cassette-tape recorder with a microphone incorporated and a DVD-player with some special functions. All analogue. That's all!

#### When did you realise that?

Recently.

#### How did you get in touch with William Bennett and Come Organization?

I sent some of my tapes to them to exchange with their products. That's all.

# There is a story of a fake record deal where Steven Stapleton was also involved, how did you come to terms with them?

Are people still interested in such sterile dissertations?

#### Perhaps that may help to clarify...

You're right. I'd been in touch with Steven Stapleton and through him with William Bennett of Come Org and he proposed to me to have issued for their label an LP. It was a very good opportunity to get a little popularity in the United Kingdom. I signed a fictitious contract and then I sent to William a cassette tape with some tracks recorded and in few months the record was out, but to my very big surprise there was some Nazi speech overdubbed on it and my name was changed in Leibstandarte SS MB... I was very surprised but reluctantly I accepted... Then after some months a second issue went out and the story was the same. And the rest you know. By the way, what is done is done and can't be undone.

# How was the experience of working on music for the film *Morder unter Uns*Come Organization did for you?

I didn't take part on that project at all!

#### Could you say, then, what is the real story of that album and film?

The album evidences there are still at our times, but concerning the film I don't remember how the things went. I'm very sorry about that... I remember only that there was a person involved in this project, Paul Hurst.

There was a hiatus for some years after what's called your Archeo period.

How did you come back to music making, and with which aims in mind?

I came back with renovated forces to express my renewed personality. The liner notes written on Colori explained that properly.

## Did Emanuele Carcano and his label Alga Marghen, play a role in your comeback?

A very important role, because at that time he was the only person who really trusted on my effective capacities.

### Who created the EEs'T series and with which idea?

It was a project created in cooperation with Carcano. The aim was to re-edit the already deleted records in order to avoid the continuous speculation with the originals.

After being an absolute solo artist you started doing collaborative work. That added a new facet to your work, with the particularity of you considered somebody who doesn't mix with others. How did that change?

I tried to get new vitality cooperating with others in order to have an exchange of emotions, thoughts, feelings, etc. And it helped me to mature myself and to open new purposes in my life.

## Is there a sense of spiritual content to be understood in the work you are doing?

You're right. This is the part of myself, which makes me really happy and free. In my decompositions there is a sort of inner battle between the carnal against the spiritual and it's a daily struggle to stay alive in this decadent epoch. But at the end the victory is in a positive way.

I'm interested in how your work has been received after your comeback.

There have been critical or adverse reactions, especially since it mutated a radical, jarring sound into a more calm and introspective one, into a sort of ambient terrain. What would you respond to those who accuse you of mellowing out, getting into new age territory?

The reactions were quite negative (except very few impartial ones) about my trilogy *Colori, First Day / Last Day* and *Dates*, but I explained that I was not involved in any "new age" trend, and the sounds contained in those works are just coming from my peaceful inner mood.

But now you returned to some kind of more noise-oriented work again...

It's not a return but an evolution.

How would you define your approach into the realms of ambient music? It's an exciting experience originated by my research of new experiences. It's part of my innate eclecticism.

# What's your meaning about this musical form and how do you consider it has evolved nowadays?

Sorry but I'm not really involved so much in this realm and I don't have enough competence of it.

There's certainly an interesting bunch of musicians working in this area, how much are you aware of them?

Please see above.

Especially in your recent work there is an explicit reference to the Bible, and seems to reflect a complex structure. Based on which kind of specific interest on the sacred writings do you build the frameworks in relationship to your music?

I appreciate you made this question, which demonstrates you are curious of the Holy Scriptures. The reference to The Bible is purely academic and to show to the people the reality of the teachings contained on it, so far from the deceptive explanations made by the traditional religions.

There seems to be a strong presence of the piano and sparse keyboard work, used more in a sense to give colour than formal structure. Where do you take your inspiration from?

Mostly from the minimalistic gear of our spiritual existence.

In your work *Antarctic Mosaic*, based upon cut and paste of classical and electronic music, and Hertzian waves, you anticipate on *The Technological Nonsense*. Could you elucidate on that upcoming book?

It's a written project based on spreading out some sentences coming from scientific/technological universe, mixed up in a sort of lexologic nonsense but with an emotional sense.

# Could you give also a glimpse on your use of classical music as a sound source? What are the qualities you strive for?

I understand you were impressed by the two transition works *Frammenti* and *Antarctic Mosaic* that only very few people appreciated. Anyhow, I tried to take out some looped samplers from the so-called symphonies searching for the parts where the sonorities where so averse from the whole harmonic structures.

#### Could you specify about which symphonies you sampled?

I used some excerpts from Dvòrak, Vivaldi, Schumann, Haydn, and others I don't remember the composers' names.

You have made an analogy between colours and suffering, in your work *Dead Colours*, indeed your comeback trilogy (*Colori, First Day/Last Day* and *Dates*) introduced it. Which significance has a visual content in your work and how do you established this parallel?

The visual represents the abstraction of the sonorous contents. Sometimes the parallel is evident, but sometimes is not so evident because I prefer to leave a free interpretation to the user.

In which sense it refers to a spiritual search and to factual circumstances? Without the spiritual search there is no hope to modify the factual circumstances.

You mention and refer widely to a certain tradition of minimal music present in your work. Are you encompassing the axis of Riley / Glass / Young / Reich to some extent?

I claim to tread in the above artists' footsteps, but I'm very obliged to them to have opened the research.

# If there were an interest in that particular school, what would be the values you may rescue from it?

At the times of *Regel*, there were a sort of imitation of Riley's sound sculptures, but was only a very short parenthesis.

#### What are you referring to when you mention Riley's sound sculptures?

I'm referring to his particular compressed sound, which holds your mind as if in a mantric vice.

# Are you aware of another minimalists that resurfaced in past years, like Charlemagne Palestine or Éliane Radigue?

I know very well Palestine because the EEs'T record label issued some of his past and recent works, but I don't know anything about Radigue...

#### What are your thoughts on Palestine's music?

I don't have any.

It is known your interest in bionics, and even your recent work *Niddah*Emmhna, part of the box Together's Symphony along Italian atmospherics

artist Nimh, lists everything from "erythrocyte frequencies, menarchal viola, neurological piano" to "coagulant clangs" among its sound sources. Maybe I'm getting messed up at that, but what could be understood as "bionic aesthetics" in your work?

I'm interested in bionics because I love life and I hate death. The death is our enemy and the life is our friend. I like to use this kind of aesthetics to awaken the listener and to avoid the dangerous abysses of some gothic/esoteric/occultism culture.

In relation to that, were you aware about the concepts of cybernetics – "music is sound – and sound is self-sufficient"- coined by German composer Roland Kayn, where the result coming out of electronic circuitry systems would be unpredictable for the composer, or were you influenced by other composers working in that field / way?

I don't use to have any philosophical influences in my work because I prefer to use the genuine emotionality, devoid of any artful schema.

You have constantly struggled a battle against the ugly face of consumerism, responding with a music that is ascetic and obsessive in its conception. Do you think the battle has got its dividends?

It's not my aim to win any battle because that is a task beyond my capability, but I can say that giving a view to the past 25 years the followers of this discipline have increased.

Your recent works shows a marked interest in long duration. What is the aim of that form of suspended, slow musical evolution?

It's simply the devotion to a sort of meditative sound and during the 30 or 40 minutes of a single track the magmatic sonorities are trying to capture the attention of meditative people, without hypnotizing them.

Taking in consideration that there are some bootlegs of your work and that your records appeared in every format, what is your position about having total quality control on the material you release?

It's a very peculiar thing; that's why in collaboration with Frank Maier at Vinyl On Demand I started a sort of battle against the bootleggers in order to fix my archives in a better quality of the final product and to satisfy a larger number of initiates.

## How is your experience with recent releases on net labels and free downloadable music on the Internet?

It was a very satisfactory experience and the feedback very positive.

There are many references to apocalypse, Armageddon and the abolishment of human presence on earth in your work (as stated in the notes of *Mokushi XVI, XVI*), in face of a new era. How does this connect with the challenging and oppressive atmospheres in your music?

Practically those atmospheres describe the current human presence influenced by the demonic presences on earth, and the *Armageddon* final war is simply the total freedom by their slavery!

You were always quite well networked during the eighties with many well-known names of the industrial scene and continue to be so. Now you also collaborate extensively with other artists (among others Telepherique, Sandro Kaiser, Aube, Land Use, Siegmar Fricke). What are the differences in the network between now and then?

I can't say anything because during my networking during the 80's I'd already quit the underground scene.

### Could you specify which underground scene are you referring to?

The scene where people like Enrico Piva and other unknown artists who were moving their shy steps.

### How do you set collaborative work?

After the first approach, I propose to send some material to the collaborator, which is going to include his sounds and some treatments, special effects, etc. And then he's going to send back the result to me for the final approval. All this work is made only by mail.

#### Could you comment on upcoming activities?

I'm preparing about 8 or 9 collaborations with national and international artists

like Claudio Rocchetti, Matteo/Hue Uggeri, Emanuela de Angelis, Saverio Evangelista, Crìa Cuervos, Maor Appelbaum, Siegmar Fricke, Craig Hilton, and my solo projects will be ready soon, I'm referring to Blut Und Nebel, Neuro-Munalp, Eascape to Bela-Zoar, Nevrobatterio, and others.

### INTERVIEW BY PHILIPPE BLACHE, 2007

Prodigious avant-gardist electronic creator, Maurizio Bianchi can today be considered among the true leaders of environmental, molecular and cosmic music. Hi first materials published between 1979 and 1984 provide new musical forms of contestation and deterritorialisation throw pulverised sounds. The main purpose was to compose massive, nuclear and apocalyptical musical manifestations that can infiltrates and disturb the empire of appearances, repression and dogmatic conventions. Great artefacts and electronic collages in *Symphony For A Genocide* and *Menses* offer a "decodification" and a primitive meditation about territorialized events, aggression and chaos.

Some of his later works (*M. I. Nheem Alysm...*) will carry on virtual soundscapes and abstract projections but in order to renew with continuous sound forms, non-abrasive transformations and subtle micro-perceptions. The material is turned to consistent, harmonised and cosmic inventions, producing visceral, introspective inflexions / reflexions. M.B's idiosyncratic musical universe delivers on the listener some contemplative, intellectual reactions and participations about flux, travel, disintegration. His music rises from the deep chaotic sides of the ground to open a way in order to capture forces of the cosmos. The conjugation between abstract sound machines, synthesised sounds and concrete noises enable to create molecular possibilities and forces (in a sense ever developed in the "rhizomatic" theories of Deleuze/ guattari).

With M.B's art and thanks to new spectral communications, we have the chance to discern and question "opened-sound", "colour-sound", "travel sound", each of them animated, deterritorialised in molecular lines.

Let's start at the beginning and your inflexion for opened musical forms dominated by collages from urban, industrial sounds and other disturbing, unusual sources of sounds (from *Mectpyo/Blut* in 1980 to the now cult *Symphony For A Genocide* in 1981 and the greatly shocking *Menses* one year after).

This early period was said to be in the direct mood of the "industrial scene". However I'm not an expert in the genre. I only know Whitehouse which is too much for my ears. I would like to say that the first impression that comes to my mind is that you tried to re-appropriate the language and possibilities of tape manipulations.

Do your first essays largely used this technique and do you feel closed to successive experimentations from "concrete" music and electro acoustic researches?

My early days were influenced by the concrete universe, trying to sew together some compositions made by other artists, with my personal view of experimentation that was very abstract and beyond of the usual researches in the electronic field, using not electronics at all!

### Where did your first musical ideas and inspirations come from in terms of composition? What's your musical background?

Came from the early "cosmic couriers" and the apocalyptic experiments like Kluster, Neu!, Schnitzler, Seesselberg, etc, even if my musical background were the decadent rock and the beat scene until the 1969.

For me it is evident that your first demonstrations in electronic experimentation suggested something totally innovative in popular music, a way to create a musical world which is a jump into the unknown.

The natural / creative disorder and the heterogeneity of collages seem to be common motifs in your first essays. They reveal new perceptions and a new musical personality, rejecting all mainstream type of music.

Would you agree with this statement and do you feel you are in a constant relationship with new techniques and also new human, existential, symbolical thematics?

I can't say yes or not, because the most important thing is to communicate something edifying and lasting in the minds and in the hearts of my listeners.

With all these revolutionary, transgressive experimentations and subversive architectures of sounds, do you consider yourself to be a post-modern or post-industrial artist?

I thought so long about these definitions and the only answer I found is that I'm a pre-modern non artist with some pre-industrial attitudes, placed gar away from my colleagues defeated.

Speaking about the emotional feeling provided by all these long collage pieces, they seem to reveal very deadly, gloomy, dark impressions, "vomiting" the negative and disgusting side of the world, corruption, disintegration of bodies and humanity, the triumph of chaos (mainly because of massive dissonances and the noises selected)...How do you personally interpret these compositions in a sensitive way?

I don't have a personal interpretation, but I feel to have created a dangerous vortex of neurotic sounds that graze the madness of the chaos. And when you'll reach that climax, probably you'll have time to think in your independent freedom.

I've heard that during this period you made several soundtracks for movies (Morder Unter Us, Armaghedon). I didn't have the chance to listen to it and I've no informations about the movies. Can you tell me more about the concept related to your work in this adventure?

Those movies never saw the light, but remained as abstract projects for a regretting generation.

In 1983, you released *The Plain Truth* which marks a turning point in your musical career and a growing attraction for synthesised sounds, continuous sound forms. Have you ever heard analog synth essays and psycheletronic attacks from other countries? I think notably about Heldon, Philippe Besombes (from France) and Cluster, Nekropolis (From Germany).

That project was based on my research of the spiritual light, and the fact there were synthetic sounds on it, it was a pure coincidence, without any relation with other psychedelectronic pioneers.

The spectral sounds released in *The Plain Truth* seem to include more harmonies and a higher degree of perception concerning duration. The "psycho acoustic" effects on the listeners are deeply introspective and turned to contemplation. What kind of musical language did you want to create in this album? Did you use new techniques and materials to function as emotions and feelings you want to pass to the listeners?

To pursue the best successful I used for my first time a biolins-keboard in order to create a dazzling effect which makes the emotive strength more genuine and spatial.

With time and after a wealth of electronic pieces, your musical signature seem to be progressively touched by a quest for subliminal, almost "ghostly", sometimes "somnembulic" sounds designed to reach the listener in another way of consciousness (I am thinking about the mental abstractions of M.I. Nheem Alysm, the claustrophobic The Testamentory Corridor and the "interrupted" soundsculptures of Cycles).

Time and spatialization of minimal electronic textures seem to offer a new opportunity to explore the movement and fragility of existence. If I'm not wrong how can you explain this evolution (compared to serial and dissonant excesses of the past)?

There is not any comparison with the past, but only the full awareness of a painful evolution of neurotic diseases.

Chronologically do you feel you have passed through different phases of creation (oppressive, surreal "magnetic" music, to free form improvisations and dark musical symbolism...?)

There is not a chronological genesis, but a radio-therapeutic apocalypse. Anyhow I feel that my research is still going on, looking for new territories.

Some of your long minimalist pieces for piano and electronic noises, radically play with the disintegration, decomposition and deterioration of the signal (*M.I. Nheem Alysm...*). Do they contain a metaphysical aspect? A meditation about the past, amnesia, forgotten memories?

They contain a collective dissertation of psycho-phonic inconvertibility, where the mutability of human foolishness meets the enzymatic stability of the divine wisdom.

You've recently worked with many artists (notably the Italians of Nimh and the German duo Telepherique). How did you decide to get involved in these different projects and what are you searching for in those collaborative releases?

It was the exciting fruit of a very strong and faithful friendship. I was searching the fusion of our inner spirituality.

Your musical catalogue is impressively huge, I was wondering how do you find enough time and inspiration to publish all these albums? Which of them do you consider to be the most representative?

Yes, it is. Maybe I'm regaining the time lost...well, the inspiration comes very easily because I keep myself gathered on my own aim which is to awaken public opinion to the real freedom.

Considering a part of your work as stratification, spatialisation of organic / physical sounds I was wondering if you occasionally work with others medias, I mean collaborations with avant-gardist and conceptual artists for "happenings", visual performances for a new creative approach?

M.B: No, I never been interested on such medias

### Today, on which musical project are you working on?

Some collaborations with Cria Cuervos, Emanuela de Angelis, Maor Appelbaum and some solo works. I keep myself so active to avoid to fall in the mental torpor.

### NATURAL CYCLES

### Interview: Maurizio Bianchi & Emanuela De Angelis, 2008

Maurizio Bianchi is one of the leader of the Italian noise and experimental scene. He first appeared in 1979, and in the first five years of his career, he released a considerable amount of work on a variety of labels before retiring from the music scene completely. For the next thirteen years, he remained silent, but he resumed his relentless work pace.

His latest project is a collaboration with Emanuela De Angelis Twenty years his junior, De Angelis has nevertheless an already impressive body of work behind her, as a member of various formations and, in recent years, as a solo artist. As MD+EDA, the pair have, for a moment, left behind their respective noise remit to investigate a much quieter realm, developed over the whole length of their first album together.

Robert Rowlands caught up with the pair to discuss age difference, the pros and cons of working on a collaborative project and how their calm soundscapes are much noisier than it seems.

#### How did the two of you end up collaborating?

Maurizio Bianchi: I've been in touch with Emanuela since 2004 and I was fascinated because she was the only woman in Italy who is involved in the experimental field; I decided to propose a collaboration between us, and she accepted. I sent her some basic sounds, she added her treatments and sent back everything to me for me to do the final loops treatment.

Emanuela De Angelis: We got in touch by e-mail. Maurizio sent me some of his tapes. I sampled and "played" with them and sent him a CD with some tracks that he manipulated and remixed.

### One of you is twenty years younger than the other. How easy or difficult is it for two people of different musical generations to work together?

MB: No difficulties at all when you have the same intentions and the same feelings.

EDA: I didn't feel uncomfortable at all about our age or musical experience difference. Maurizio is such a respectful and easy going person!

#### What have you both learnt about each other from working together?

MB: I learnt that with honesty, loyalty and perseverance you can be successful.

EDA: Maurizio worked a lot for this record, he was constantly giving me strength and positive vibes about Regolelettroniche and that helped me feeling more confident about what I do with sound. He's a very human and supporting person. Although we never met in person I immediately felt that this experience was more like 'two human beings joining and playing with sound' instead of being a matter of 'two self-centred musicians trying to make some cool music'.

#### Has it changed your views on certain ideas or artists?

MB: It has increased my respect for them.

EDA: I think this is the kind of collaboration I like. When it works like that it's just perfect to me.

### If each of you were to describe the other's personality, what would you say?

MB: I can perceive her from her musicality that Emanuela is very humble but determinate.

EDA: Like I said before I think that Maurizio is a very kind and respectful man, warm, honest, enthusiastic and positive.

### The album seems very carefully put together. Are you both perfectionists in the studio?

MB: Usually not, but for this project I tried to be more precise, but not at an exasperated level.

EDA: I wish I could be a perfectionist! Actually I end up being instinctive and often I have to go back and correct my mistakes.

### Does working in a collaboration make it easier or harder to produce an album?

MB: It's not harder, just a little bit longer.

EDA: I think that it's easier because you have another point of view on the music and it is something very intriguing to see how different sounds and influences could blend together. Personally I enjoy working with other musicians' sound sources because I tend to get stuck on the same samples I create. It could get difficult when it comes to compromise about something, but this happens in everyday life too, not only in a creative process, so it's not a major problem.

### I understand you came up with some rules before beginning this project. What were they, and why were they so important?

EDA: That was not set before of beginning this project. Maybe Maurizio could explain better than me...

MB: Because our whole existence is regulated by rules, without them there is only anarchy and a chaotic orgy.

### Some people would prefer to improvise as they go along. Is it important to have a firm set of rules before making an album?

MB: The improvisation for me is the normality, but sometimes we need to regulate ourselves to be more conscious of our limits.

#### Is this an album that you could easily replicate in a live performance?

EDA: I don't think so, and I think that if we ever perform live we won't choose to replicate it exactly as it is. I guess it would be the same mood, but constructed differently.

### I expected the album to be a lot noisier coming from two so-called noise artists. Why is the album so peaceful?

EDA: I think it's quite noisy, actually. But I can see why you think it's peaceful: the mood is peaceful, and it develops very slowly. It is probably because we both are fascinated by long cycles, like the one you have in nature.

### There is a lot of repetition on the album. How important is that to your music?

MB: Repetition is all around us, starting from sunrise and sunset. Transposed to the

music, repetition reminds us our need of eternity.

EDA: Well, music is about repetition (I think someone said this before me), so I think it is important in every kind of music: rock and roll, folk, electronic... I like to get lost in repetition when it seems like every loop has its own 'weight' and 'meaning' to the track structure. I'm often inspired by organic textures which are based on repetition.

#### How have people been reacting to this album?

MB: Very positively, I think.

EDA: Quite good I think. My dad said that it is music for films!

#### Will there be more collaborations between you?

EDA: We have been talking about it, so hopefully yes we will.

MB: Probably in the near future.

### If you were to describe this record, what was the sound you were looking for?

MB: Meditative sounds for diligent people.

### In terms of contemporaries, who are the artists you most admire and respect?

MB: All the artists who like to express their feelings without pressures.

EDA: Of course I admire K.H. Stockhausen, Steve Reich, David Toop and other big names... but this is a bit obvious, isn't it? So I would like to mention a few 'families' of artist who are good musicians and very nice people: Baskaru, Highpoint Lowlife, Slow Sound System, Stasisfield, Active Suspension, 12k -Line. I always keep an eye on them and I recommend their music.

### What about the state of modern music? Does it depress or excite you? MB: It gives to me a sense of empty.

EDA: There are plenty of good musicians out there. When you start looking for something on the web, for instance, you find that a lot of unsigned bands and solo musicians (basically boys and girls in their rooms) are producing good stuff. They make their own website and pretty good visual design as well. I find that very exciting. On the other hand I know that it gets difficult to become a 'professional' musician when you have a full time job or when you have to look after you children. Just a few of them are truly motivated and/or could afford the amount of work/expenses that it involves. Most of the mainstream basically tends to depress me, because I find that there's nothing new. Most bands just sound like a horrible mixture of already heard stuff wrapped in a new shiny pack.

### There is a lot of talk about the future of the music industry at the moment because of the decline of CD sales. How do you think this will affect the underground or avant-garde music scenes?

MB: With the rise of album downloads, the underground scene received a big finishing blow. Only the intelligent labels will survive.

EDA: I think it will have some kind of bad effect somehow, I'm afraid. Most of the people are getting used to download, even when it comes to underground or

avant-garde. It is hard for a small independent label to survive, people must know that some owners have a second job to help them with expenses. They do this because they love music and this should be more than a good reason to support them by buying their records and downloading MP3 legally.

### What about the Italian music scene – are you excited by some of the music coming out of the country at the moment? If so, who?

MB: I respect artists like NIMH, MDT, TH26, Claudio Rocchetti, Crìa Cuervos.

EDA: There is quite a good underground scene in Italy and it is well supported by music magazines and radios shows like the ones broadcasted by Rai Radio 3 (Italian National Radio). I appreciate Baskaru's Italian artists, but there are many others like friend Globster, Stefano Tedesco, Wang-inc that I like.

# The music on Regolelettroniche sounds very distant from the hustle and bustle of modern life. Is it trying to escape from the harshness and discord of modern life?

EDA: It was not meant to be like that, but personally I often tend to escape from the chaos and pressure of modern life. I like to imagine my own ideal landscape or soundscape, reading and looking at pictures I like, so I think it could be possible that it affected the sound on the record.

MB: It's a sophisticated way to redeem the lost souls.

### Just from what I have read about you, you appear to both be very studious and serious musicians. Is this an accurate judgement?

MB: I can only tell you about me: I take every experiment I do very seriously, because it is my life.

EDA: I'm not that serious and studious, honestly. I think it's my glasses' fault: they make me look geekier than I am.

# STATEMENT BY MAURIZIO BIANCHI / M.B.

Dear friend,

After an appropriate meditation I inform you that from today, for strictly private reasons, I'm stopping making music. Of course, all the projects already started (for example solo releases, reissues, collaborations, etc.) will be accomplished, except some rare exceptions.

Thank you for your understanding,

maurizio bianchi 19th August 1979/19th August 2009

### **PLANEMO #4, 2012**

From the early XX century Futurists to the contemporary Noise artists, electronic and electroacoustic sounds are a frequent site in the Italian underground. Maurizio Bianchi started his prolific and eclectic career way back in 1979, remaining active 17 years in total (1979-1984, 1997-2009). He is credited worldwide as one of the first Noise artists ever, and his contribution was decisive to help shape the then young Noise scene, sonically and aesthetically.

Many regard earlier Bianchi's works as masterpieces, and Bianchi himself as a Noise pioneer, often alongside other late 1970's acts like Nurse With Wound, Whitehouse, Merzbow, or The Haters. His contribution was decisive also due to his posture: rather than performing live as all the aforementioned acts, assuming that as a very important part of his artistic work (in line with the Punk ancestors), Bianchi chose seclusion and complete obscurity. It was the only possible path, if one values the artistic statement above all else.

His influence is particularly felt in Italy until this day. Still in the early 1980's, a considerable amount of Noise acts started to appear, taking Bianchi's sound (and, to some extent is imagery) into new extremes.

At the height of the international 1980's Noise scene Bianchi vanished. Artistically speaking, he always struggled to preserve his individuality, and that made him stop when he felt he was getting repetitive. His career took a new path after 1997, this time influenced by positivity instead of negativity, as Bianchi explains. His works started to dwell around heavy synth landscapes, minimalism, and drones. But apparently, 2009 was a good time to stop once again.

This interview was done in late March 2012, at the same time of Maurizio Bianchi's *Aktivitat / Violichte* re-issue on Cérebro Morto.

In previous interviews you mention that your introduction to electronic and electroacoustic music was made possible through electronic German music and musique concrète. When did this happen and what are your favourite musicians from those two universes? You have mentioned influences by Tangerine Dream, Kluster, the late Conrad Schnitzler...

It happened in the mid 1970's and my approach to Experimental music was driven by a thirst for something new and not superficial. My favourite musicians were Conrad Schnitzler and the early Throbbing Gristle.

You first started in music as a journalist, writing to Punk fanzines of the time, correct? What did you write about?

Reviews and fact sheets on various Experimental artists, almost all unknown to the majority.

Your career as a musician starts tightly connected with many of the most aggressive European Electronic acts of the early 1980's. However you always exhibited a certain degree of creative independence from contemporary trends, and the proof of that is your eclectic work. How deep were you

involved with other Italian projects (artists, labels, etc) during that initial period from the end of the 1970's until the mid 1980's? There was at least some obvious common ground. One thing that is intriguing is that you were not released by any Italian label at that time (except for your self-released works). From your hometown there was ADN, for example.

Italy has always been a very retrograde country in the aspect of Experimental music, that's why I could never find any help from Italian labels and was forced to turn abroad, which is much more open-minded to new and experimental ideas.

You have two main creative periods. Let's start with the first period, from 1979 until 1984. Generally speaking, there seems to exist two main formal direct influences to the origin of Industrial music: the 1970's Dadaist techniques and DIY approach (contemporary shared with Punk), and the Experimental music that evolved after WWII, based on electronics and electro-acoustics. Do you feel these were your two main formal influences as well, when you started composing music (first as Sacher-Pelz)?

I started composing in August 1979 only for the purpose of doing something different from the Italian music scene, but that could remain imprinted in the minds of those who listened and benefited from my experiments, so that a trace of my existence could remain for posterity.

During this time you focused on society decadence and its industrial and technological nature, and that was very clear through the music: concrete, claustrophobic, unsettling, anxious, machine-like sounds and rhythms. Pretty much the same focus other contemporary Industrial and early Noise artists had. Do you think that Italian Futurism is central here?

There are connections with Futurism but only at the level of paradox, because the industrialized society advocated by futurists was on the rise, while mine is in full decline.

You had some well-known international relations. Your first release through an international label was in 1980, by YHR Tapes. At that period you were already releasing as yourself (M.B.). After that, and until 1983, you also released through Sterile Records, Come Organisation, and Broken Flag, all of these British.

In a 1982 interview you state that you did some articles about the British scene, in the Italian press. How did you get in contact with the British Industrial and Noise scene? They also released other Italian projects of that time.

Only through audio trading (vinyl and cassettes).

There was also a connection with two US labels: Dys and Tegal. Did they approached you, or was it the other way round?

Only with Dys Records (which had publish the Mnemonists albums), while with Tegal I never had any contact (they published some of my work without my permission!).

Your earlier music has been heavily reissued since the mid 1980's through a variety of official labels. Menstrual Recordings is currently re-releasing a lot of your earlier works, something that was previously done by the

aforementioned Alga Marghen, as well as the two box sets compilations on Vinyl On Demand. Also, a great number of individual re-issues are being done by other labels. Since you're far away from those works (creatively speaking) why do you want to keep them available?

Because they are historical records, and to avoid other forms of illegal departures, unauthorised.

Since the mid 1980's you have also been heavily bootlegged. What do you feel about this? Is it an opportunity for people to listen to your music? Should it be avoided at any cost? You don't care?

It's better not to express anything...

Why did you choose to re-issue *Aktivitat* through Cérebro Morto? Because it was out of stock for a long time.

Aktivitat is probably one of your heaviest and, at the same time, rhythmic works. Can you talk a little about what you can remember about the recording of this? For example, do you have any idea of the material used? The time it took you to compose and record the work? The conceptual basis? I don't remember anything, sorry...

Which albums do you feel best represent your first creative period? *Mectpyo Bakterium* and *Armaghedon*.

You suddenly stopped making music around 1984. An artist needs to know when to stop, that's what you claim in other interviews. Was it the only reason? In 1983 you said that you didn't want to become useless like Throbbing Gristle, Psychic TV, and others. Were you disenchanted with some aspect of your music-related activities? Did you enrolled in other artistic activities not related to music, or were you completely inactive?

I have answered these questions thoroughly, but I can emphasize that life is composed of cycles, and after a cycle of hyper creativity follows another less creative. However, my project is focused on building and stabilizing my spirituality, the most important aspect of my entire life.

Your second creative period starts in 1997, almost 14 years later. You had a valuable incentive from Emanuele Carcano, from Alga Marghen, when he decided to reissue a lot of your earlier works, and also release new ones. How did this come to be?

Simply put, he had confidence in my limited means and placed me in front of the prospect of a new cycle of artistic creativity.

Contrasting with your first creative period, your sound was not so concrete, raw, and claustrophobic, but more focused in synth-shaped drones and spacious sounds. How do you explain this creative change?

I had the strength to renew myself and not be repetitive.

You also started doing a lot of collaborations from 2004 onwards. Which one do you think worked best?

For example, the one with Telepherique, my fellow believers, and then with NIMH, Sandro Kaiser, Siegmar Fricke, and many others.

Why did you choose to re-issue Violichte through Cérebro Morto?

Because behind Cérebro Morto there is a great admirer of Italian music with minimal hassle.

Composed in 2010, Violichte shows a leaning towards Minimalism. That is further strengthened by your dedicatory to Giacinto Scelsi, probably one of the most deviant figures of the early XX century composition. How have the works of Giacinto Scelsi influenced you? Do you think you were stepping the same ground that he was?

No influence in the music, but as a style of composition, and how to address life's topics.

Most of your releases artwork exhibit abstract images and plain colour covers. Why do you feel this best represents your music? For example, in *Colori* you mention the importance of the seven basic colours of the solar spectrum.

I prefer the abstraction of colour in my compositions rather than the desire to describe the growth of black and white.

There is also a preference of photographs. There are some releases that include an abstract photograph as a cover, or as an insert. Are they taken by you? What draws you to photography?

Yes, they're taken by me. The technique used to compose this type of photographs is based on light rays that are dismembered in the seven colours of the iris in order to create an overlay of coloured images.

It's almost a mandatory requisite, in order to keep doing the kind of music you do, to keep things independent and without any commercial drift. But at the same time, we're going towards a global society that's closing the possibilities to have a decent amount of free hours and money, at the same time. Do you ever think about this?

No.

As far as it's known you have never performed live. In 1982 you explained why you didn't want to. Do these reasons still remain valid after all these years?

Yes. My music is well suited to an intimate and lonely listening experience.

It is well known your home recording approach, especially in the early years. Did you ever had access to more professional equipment? For example, have you ever recorded with the aid of a recording studio? No, never.

Apparently, you stopped composing again in 2009. What are your plans for the future?

Reissues.

Can we know a little bit about your musical tastes? Are you devoted to a small range of styles, or does your collection go from A to Z?

Classical music and theocratic praises on music.

Is there any music you're particularly enjoying? Anything you would like to recommend?

No.

### Last question. How would you describe your artistic output to someone who has never listened to experimental music?

My musical style is unique and is linked to any experimental artist. It describes my emotions and my spirituality in the process of maturation, and the careful listener can come out built.

### INTERVIEW BY ANDREA FERRARIS, 2012

Maurizio, can we speak about hows and whys behind you farewell letter to the music scene you sent to your friend a couple of years ago? "Dear friend, after an appropriate meditation I inform you that from today, for strictly private reasons, I'm stopping making music. Of course, all the projects already started (for example solo releases, reissues, collaborations, etc.) will be accomplished, except some rare exceptions. Thank you for your understanding" – Maurizio Bianchi 19th August 1979/19th August 2009

There is nothing to add and nothing to remove, simply I've stopped a period of my life to concentrate myself in the reissues of my old stuff and to spend lifetime in another prolific area, the spirituality, to not mistake with the mysticism, where they meet the ghosts of the past with the reality of this.

You and Mathausen Orchestra have always been considered between the best "ancestors" of the noise scene, but what and who do you remember of the noise scene back then? And what about the whole period?

I remember names and humans behind them, like Nigel Ayers of the Nocturnal Emissions, Conrad Schnitzler, Bain Total, Enrico Piva, Pietro Mazzocchin, William Bennett and Whitehouse, Art & Technique, Masami Akita (Merzbow), etc. and mostly of them were governed by the spontaneity and genuineness, today so rare...

Wolf Eyes, John Wiese, Bastard Noise, Hair Police...the last power/harsh noise wave of American musician has more connection with the punk scene than those they've with the industrial one. Some of your early releases have always been considered landmarks of industrial music but what's your real background? (I perceive contemporary music and kraut music lurking from behind the door)

Maurizio: my real background rooted in the hysteria of early musique concrète, in the vagueness of German space music, in the delirium of punk rock, in the nonsense of contemporary music, in the brilliant of electronic music.

I know a lot of people have been surprised by you becoming a Jehovah's Witness, but considering "Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the destruction of the present world system at Armageddon is imminent, and that the establishment of God's kingdom on earth is the only solution for all problems faced by humankind" there's nothing that surprising. But what about your old music, was that a celebration of that "Armageddon-work-in-progress"? A sort of reaction?

My old music was a desperate reaction to the alienation, with the conflicts of the neurotic blackout which fights against the vacuity of modern establishment.

You're mostly well known for your early releases like Symphony For A Genocide, Triumph Of The Will, Endometrio, etc. During the second part of your carrier you've collaborated with many artists and you partially evolved/changed your style, what do you think about the fact many have underestimated some of your best works (I'm thinking to many late solo-

### releases like *The Valley Of Deep Shadow* or to the collaboration with Atrax Morgue)

The lack of estimate comes from a human injury due to my change/evolution from a primitive form of noise, until a more sophisticated sound which conglobates my old style into a new style which in effect is more primitive than the old one. Only the meditative listeners can penetrate beyond the surface.

# STATEMENT BY MAURIZIO BIANCHI / M.B.

Da Wikipedia, l'enciclopedia libera. Vai a: navigazione, ricerca Buona sera, sono Maurizio Bianchi, di cui esiste la pagina su Wikipedia, suddivisa in 4 lingue, italiano, inglese, francese e tedesco. Vi chiedo di CANCELLARE tale pagina nelle varie lingue, per motivi strettamente personali. Grazie della Vostra cortese collaborazione.

Good evening, I'm Maurizio Bianchi, of which there is a page on Wikipedia, divided into 4 languages, English, Italian, French and German. I ask you to DELETE this page in different languages, for strictly personal reasons. Thank you for your kind cooperation.

Bonsoir, Maurizio Bianchi sont, de laquelle il ya une page sur Wikipedia, divisé en 4 langues, anglais, italien, français et allemand. Je vous demande de supprimer cette page dans différentes langues, pour des raisons strictement personnelles. Je vous remercie de votre aimable coopération.

Guten Abend, sind Maurizio Bianchi, von denen gibt es eine Seite auf Wikipedia, in 4 Sprachen, Englisch, Italienisch, Französisch und Deutsch. geteilt Ich bitte Sie, diese Seite in verschiedenen Sprachen DELETE für rein persönlichen Gründen. Vielen Dank für Ihre freundliche Mitarbeit. — Preceding unsigned comment added by 178.249.184.7 (talk) 18:08, 3 November 2013 (UTC)

### MAURIZIO BIANCHI ON SYMPHONY FOR A GENOCIDE BY GIANMARCO DEL RE, 2013

Hello, Maurizio, I'll begin with a quote from Primo Levi, if I may:

"One cannot hear the music well from Ka-Be. The beating of the big drums and the cymbals reach us continuously and monotonously, but on this weft the musical phrases weave a pattern only intermittently, according to the caprices of the wind. We all look at each other from our beds, because we all feel that this music is infernal.

The tunes are few, a dozen, the same ones every day, morning and evening; marches and popular songs dear to every German. They lie engraved on our minds and will be the last thing in Lager that we shall forget: they are the voice of the Lager, the perceptible expression of its geometrical madness, of the resolution of others to annihilate us first as men in order to kill us more slowly afterwards.

When this music plays we know that our comrades, out in the fog, are marching like automatons; their souls are dead and the music drives them, like the wind drives dead leaves, and takes the place of their wills. There is no longer any will: every beat of the drum becomes a step, a reflected contraction of exhausted muscles."

- Primo Levi from Survival in Auschwitz, 1958, New York, Collier, 1961

Claude Lanzemann with his film on the Shoah has indicated that to give visual and graphic representations of the Holocaust would be immoral, whereas, according to the German painter Gerhardt Richter there are no subjects that cannot be tackled. He himself, has tried for years to depict the Holocaust through painting without finding to date, the right way of doing so. If Auschwitz is unthinkable, then we must rethink the bases of our anthropology (Hannah Arendt). If Auschwitz is unsayable, then we must rethink the bases of testimony (Primo Levi). If Auschwitz is unimaginable, we must give the same attention to an image as we do to what witnesses say. The aesthetic space of the unimaginable ignores history in its concrete singularities. To remember, one must imagine.

### How did you approach the subject from a rational point of view with Symphony for a Genocide?

At the time, my rationality was less developed than what it is was to become years later, after I resumed my musical career which I had abandoned in 1984; this means that, back in 1981, I approached such a controversial subject with the intent of shaking the minds numbed by the insensitivity of the mass media, which function as a real "factory of death" within a modernist key. The real genocide is, therefore, the one carried out by our technological industry and society; Symphony for a Genocide is only the sonic transcription of what has already been perpetrated in the past.

All tracks on the album bear the title of different concentration camps, from Treblinka to Auschwitz, and from Chelmno to Sobibor. How did you approach the subject from an empirical point of view, or, in other words, have you attempted to translate any research work you might've carried out into musical form?

The titles refer to our modern extermination camps, which could be seen as New York and Tokyo or Berlin and Milan, Moscow or Shanghai, Cairo and Sao Paolo, or Addis Ababa, and Riyadh etc. places where the extermination of the human mind is carried out on a daily basis in order to achieve the standardization of thought and behaviour, moulded on insolent consumerism and sullen futility.

Your reference points at the time could be found in concrete music. Nonetheless, did you take into account a piece such as Olivier Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*, which he wrote and played in the concentration camp of Görlitz, either from a religious point of view, as it is a profoundly religious work based on the Apocalypse, as well as from a philosophical and musical point of view especially for what concerns rhythm?

I didn't take into account any previous works by any other artist, I simply took a decompositional approach, which was connected to the specific emotional state I was going through at the time.

In the linear notes to Symphony For A Genocide you wrote: "The moral of this work: The past punishment is the inevitable blindness of the present."

A discussion of Auschwitz would benefit from a more in-depth analysis and longer conversation, but I would like to quote form the introduction to a fundamental book on the subject: Remnants of Auschwitz by Giorgio Agamben:

"Thanks to an increasingly wide ranging and rigorous studies – amongst which Raul Hilberg's The Destruction of the European Jews occupies a special place – the problem of the historical, material, technical, bureaucratic, and legal circumstances in which the extermination of the Jews took place has been sufficiently clarified. (...) The same cannot be said for the ethical and political significance of the extermination, or even for a human understanding of what happened there – that is, for its contemporary relevance. Not only do we lack anything close to a complete understanding; even the sense and the reasons for the behaviour of the executioners and the victims, indeed very often their very words, still seem profoundly enigmatic. This can only encourage the opinion of those who would like Auschwitz to remain forever incomprehensible. (...) The aporia of Auschwitz is, indeed, the very aporia of historical knowledge: a non-coincidence between facts and truth, between verification and comprehension."

### Do you believe that music can generate a level of comprehension of the issues that revolve around this aporia?

Only if applied to the current situation where ghosts from the past occasionally raise their heads, but only to stir a few dead leaves (or desensitized consciences). Still, after the "wind" of memory has subsided, everything resumes its original state as an amorphous substance completely detached from reality and everyday life.

On Symphony For A Genocide William Bennett from Whitehouse wrote "There are two different MB styles – the technological power works and secondly the low key depression pieces which this record belongs to. All types of death do well with this ultimate funeral – Maurizio is ready to unload his death cargo".

In 1981, Whitehouse released the album *Buchenwald*. What is the degree of contiguity between the two albums and how would you define your position within Industrial music, taking into account the fact that when you first started releasing music, then term still hadn't become current currency? There is no contiguity between the two albums, but only a sort of celebration of technological extermination. My position within experimental music, was and still is a detached and autonomous one inasmuch as I consider the "industrial" label as highly restricting. Moreover, in my case, one could talk about a universal technological language based on the freedom of expressing one's own innermost and hidden feelings and sensations in a radical and constructive way.

You have reprised the subject of Symphony For A Genocide with Carcinosi, subtitled "Decomposizione Per Organismi Bionici e Mutazioni Concrete" (Decomposition for Bionic Organisms and Concrete Mutations):

"A nodulose decrease of few sparkling casings, with manual scents or prolonged sick terms of tumoral cells. To replenish the majority of the rusty pathology we inject a fit existence in the deadly symptom of a weak bandage. The microscopic precipice undertakes a nasty hesitation into the bored carcinosi. Which is the calamitous result of the adamic transgression."

The original vinyl release had two tracks: "Third Cycle (Cyanosis): Carcinosis Oswiecim (1979)" on side A and "Fourth Cycle (Bionic): Carcinosis Brzezinka (1982)" on side B. Oswiecim and Brzezinka, i.e. Auschwitz and Birkenau. What current cycle has our society reached? The final cycle, which has not been highlighted by the album you were referring to, as this final cycle is only the prelude to a totally new and completely revolutionary forthcoming one that will mould the "demythizied" minds and will warm the beating hearts of those who will survive the destruction of this satanic state of things.

There were quite a few concentration camps in Italy as well, and there have been many massacres. Have you ever thought of composing on album on this subject?

I have never thought of interacting this way, making explicit references to the Italian context, especially since my discourse transcends any national and international barriers and is geared towards a much broader picture, even from an existential point of view, that has no pertinence with any possible apology of historical investigations.

Talking about your early works in an interview with Andrea Ferraris, you stated that you strongly wanted to desecrate sonic traditionalism, striving more on the re-transposition of the "old", within a psycho-neurotic framework, rather than on a relentless search for the new. The often shocking and clinically necrotic images were associated to the musical discourse at the basis of your alienating re-elaboration devoid of any

possible compromise. I would like you to elaborate on two points, in particular. Firstly, was re-transposing the old a way for you to widen the discourse on memory? As for the visual images, do you believe there is a safety margin beyond which any ethical concept is lost?

To re-transpose the old, one needs to have roots and my roots can be found in sonic syncretism. For what concerns the visual side of things, often, specific images have a greater impact than a thousand words and academic formulations and, since my metallurgical objective was to awaken the anesthetized conscience of people, the only way of doing so, was through the use of shocking images that circled the border between what is ethical and what is not.

A narrative drive permeates the underlining conceptual discourse at the basis of some of your works, as with *Vir-Uz*, the album you have made with Andrea Ics Ferraris. *Vir-Uz* is based on the Book of Job and the field recordings where taken by Andrea in Alessandria's Jewish cemetery.

The Book is centred round the issue of theodicy – whether or not one can have faith in the goodness and worthiness of an omnipotent creator who is apparently responsible for creating evil, and tolerating the suffering of the innocent.

How important is it to you to indicate the precise co-ordinates of a particular work in order to guide the ensuing critical discourse on specific themes? It is fundamental aspect, even if in my musical approach, I begin by creating the soundtrack and then I tackle the subject and the different themes attached to it. I know this is not an easy practice to follow, but in my case it is the most coherent and functional.

Dioxi was released by Menstrual Recordings in a limited edition of 151 copies. It was composed together with Siegmar Fricke and inspired by the fifth chapter of the Gospel According to Matthew, which you quote in the liner notes:

"Happy are those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, since the kingdom of the heavens belongs to them. Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you... Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens; for in that way they persecuted the prophets prior to you."

(Taken from the Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 5, verses 10, 11 and 12).

I would now like to quote from Pasolini where he talks about his film adaptations of the same Gospel:

"I could have demystified the real historical situation, the relationship between Pilate and Herod, I could have demystified the figure of Christ mythicized by Romanticism, by Catholicism and the Counter Reformation. I could have demystified everything, but then, how could I have demystified the problem of death? The issue that I cannot demystify is that which is irrational and therefore, in a certain way, religious, and is inherent in the mystery of the world. That cannot be demystified."

#### Pasolini also added on his intention behind the film:

"I want to make a work of poetry. Not a religious work in the current sense of the term nor a work of ideology. In words both simple and poor: I do not believe that Christ was the Son of God, because I am not a believer – at least not consciously. But I believe Christ to be divine and I believe there was in him a humanity so great, rigorous and ideal as to go beyond the common terms of humanity. This is why I talk about 'poetry': an irrational instrument to express this irrational feeling of mine for Christ".

#### Is Dioxi a poetic, religious or ideological work?

It has an ethical and religious character, in which strong supernatural forces interact. These forces reconnect to the completion of our spiritual integrity and aim to be, at the same time, a prophetic anticipation of future patterns relating to the "end of time" in which real Christians will be fiercely persecuted – and I hope to be included amongst them (this is not a presumptuous act, rather a concrete reality).

The Testamentary Corridor is dedicated to the lamented martyrs. You also write in the linear notes that it is made of "Insubordinate discord in five tempos for monolithic keyboards and multicellular dissonances, perpetrated during the autumn of 2005." Furthermore, striking a note of pessimism, you add that, "To commemorate a testamentary event the human beings expend time and care, all their energies, but sometimes the results are disappointing... Due to the unconventional heritage of our rhetorical history lost in the corridor of time."

On the subject of aural commemoration, do you feel that there are works, which have achieved satisfactory results within the real of music?

I don't know how to answer this question, but what I can say is that commemorations can have an undesired effect. As it is been said, "It is not in man who walks to direct his steps." Therefore there can be no comments, no questions, but only satisfactory answers.

Genocidio 20 contains samples from Nazi propaganda by the likes of Rudolf Hess, Adolf Wagner, Josef Goebbels, Adolf Hitler, Horst-Wessels-Song etc.

Still, I have read in an interview with Marcelo Aguire, that you had no say whatsoever on this inclusion, which was carried out by other people at a later stage. Could you clarify this for me? Also what is your position on negationism when it comes to freedom of expression?

As I have already stated in the past, circumstances beyond my control and independent of my own will, brought about the contamination of my original sound. I can only deplore that this has happened and regret the fact that I have not been quick or alert enough to prevent this from happening. However I can conscientiously say that freedom of expression has its negative side, as it sometimes falls into the trivial and the futile. Therefore my position on the subject is one of absolute neutrality.

The House of Mourning is the title of your collaboration with the German duo Telepherique. In the linear notes you quote from the Book of the Ecclesiastes:

"Better is to go to the house of mourning than to go to the banquet house, because that is the end of all mankind; and the one alive should take it to his heart... the heart of the wise ones is in the house of mourning..."

Matteo Uggeri, another young musician you have collaborated with on several albums, refers to this as a concept album on mourning which explores feelings of loss and longing for those who are no longer amongst us.

How did this collaboration come about? Also, I know that the material you sent Telepherique was built around acoustic instruments and analogue processing and it included cello, violin, flute, keyboards, waves, and noises (concrete noises). In turn, Telepherique processed this material adding synthesizers, field recordings, and vocal samples. Did you have a clear idea from the start of what the structure of the album was going to be with its 12 tracks that chronicle the different stages of mourning: Sad News; Shock; Sorrow; Refuse To Believe It; Deep Pain; Cry For Help; Anxiety; Emptiness; Guilty Conscience; Mood Fluctuation; Rage; and Come to Terms? This is my second collaboration with Klaus and Danijela Jochim and it came about at a particular time in my life, when, in the space of thirty months, I lost both my parents. Therefore, this album holds a deeper personal meaning than it might first be evident. From a technical point of view, the album was built by Telepherique on my backing track, that were used as an anachronistic background, for something which aims to be a celebration of mourning and, at the same time, an acknowledgment of humankind's futility and ineptitude when facing the unavoidability of adverse death.

As Andrea Ferraris pointed out, your collaboration with Sandro Kaiser gave you the "incentive to follow the ancient paths of noise but with a renewed passion for the obscure atmospheres of 'abandoned ambient' (which is a very apt definition by Kaiser himself)." In terms of revisiting old themes, what are the new elements you have introduced in albums such as The Testamentary Corridor and Vir-Uz in relation to Symphony For A Genocide? The aim was not to create something new but to rework old sounds that were central to my early production as the seed of commemoration was already present in me 25/30 years earlier and all I needed to do was to make it germinate through a more elaborate and modernist approach. This has made it technically more evolved and direct towards a more elaborate and sophisticated sound.

On sound, Giacinto Scelsi wrote: "He who does not penetrate to the interior, to the heart of sound, even though a perfect craftsman, a great technician, will never be a true artist, a true musician". He also regarded sound as "immobility's first motion" adding, "There is the beginning of Creation!"

#### On the same subject Rudolf Steiner wrote:

"Future development of music will move towards spiritualization and implies recognizing the special character of individual sound. If we immerse ourselves in sound, it reveals three, five sounds or more; a single sound unfurls into melody and harmony leading directly to the spiritual world. One aspires to the understanding of sound in its spiritual depth and one wishes to go from the natural to the spiritual element".

Taking into account how different your work is to that of Giacinto Scelsi, would you say, nonetheless that there are certain affinities between the two of you?

More in terms of themes than content, even if my representation of what is spiritual is rooted in a firm stance, and comes from an awareness of the fact that only the Holy Scriptures are at the basis of true spirituality, which is not to be confused with the cold and obscure mysticism and alchemism which nowadays prevails even in the experimental scene through dark-ambient, ritual, post-industrial, martial, noise, etc., artists and groups.

To conclude, the search for spirituality is inherent in every human being who is conscious of the fact that they want to satisfy such a need, even if sometimes they do it in a wrong and most superficial way, without realizing that truth is closer than one could imagine...

# STATEMENT BY MAURIZIO BIANCHI / M.B.

While Mr Emanuele Carcano is spending a period of detoxification in the UAE, on specific instructions to his "gentle" brother located in Milan keeps churning out new editions absolutely "UNAUTHORIZED" like the Box of Sacher-Pelz + Mectpyo Box + the other "pirate" reissues.

Evidently Carcano's family need to uplift their finances profitably not quite so clear on the shoulders of myself and not only...

This is the reality of the situation, to you the impartial judgment.

M.B. May 2015